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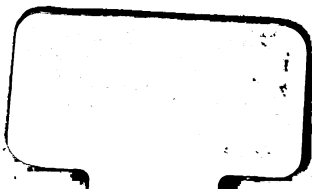
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THE
OUTCASTS.

A ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
of the Harzberg de la Motte Fouqué
BY

GEORGE SOANE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

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P R E F A C E.

“ **THE OUTCASTS**” is the production of the Baroness de la Motte Fouquè ; and is decidedly a copy of the Scotch Romances, but this, though detracting in some measure from the writer’s originality, cannot at all affect her powers of amusement with the reader ; indeed, it would be well for the Northern literature if the imitation of these excellent models were to become more general ; they might infuse into it a portion of health which it certainly wants at present,

and teach the German Romancers to substitute historic character and sound thinking for the cant of mysticism and sentiment. As it is, their characters are not the characters of life ; they are nothing but metaphysical visionaries, the mere spawn of insanity working upon dulness, and when they do act, which is seldom, for their element is talking, their actions are as little like humanity as can well be imagined. It matters not to what class they may belong, or in what situations they may be placed ; they take no colour from outward circumstances, but are alike mystics or sentimentalists, with a desperate determination of saying fine things when there is least occasion for such vanities. One is always inclined to apply to them Falstaff's excellent advice to Pistol—" Deliver your news like a man of this world ;"

few things are more wearing to a sober mind than this abominable jargon, which, under the pretence of meaning more than the language of common men, in fact means nothing, and it is not the least of our obligations to the Great Unknown that he has routed the goblins of mysticism as well as those of the church-yard. And here I can not help observing, though perhaps somewhat foreign to the immediate question, that the very looseness of style, so often objected to him, is a merit, as things are now; for the mania of fine writing was rapidly destroying the English tongue, and in time would have left us little more than the skeleton of a language. Some hundreds of words and phrases, and even many forms of speech, for which we have no equivalent, were lopt off under the charge of vulgarity,

when, in fact, their very commonness was the best proof of their being sound English ; by a perversity of taste, for which there is no accounting, a standard of style was taken from Queen Ann's time, while the really Golden Age of English literature, the age of Elizabeth, was utterly neglected or only remembered, and that but of late years, for its unrivalled dramatists. Nothing, however, could be more unjust to the great men of that period, or indeed to ourselves, than this narrowing of our admiration to one class only ; the genius of that time was in every respect gigantic, and whether it be in philosophy, history, or poetry, and putting Shakspeare out of the question as being above all comparison, the age of Elizabeth exhibits more sound thinking, more genuine wit, more exalted imagination than

can be found in any subsequent period, till the time of Scott and Byron. As to the latter's violent admiration of Pope and his half-avowed contempt for Shakspeare, it is a mask that is easily seen through ; a man of such transcendent talents must know better, but his faults may be well forgiven for his merits ; he and Sir Walter Scott are the reputation of this country with foreigners ; and though they could not bring us back to the old school, they have checked the mania of mysticism. Their works are as much an object of admiration in France and Germany as in England and Scotland ; and one is puzzled to understand that little spirit of envy which can carp at such authors, whose fame can not be lessened without lessening the fame of the nation. But to return to the Baroness.

In her former works, with no small portion of power, she yet showed herself to be strongly infected with her country epidemic, and even in the present volumes there are, occasionally, strong traces of the old disease. She has besides, been unfortunate in having adventured on English ground ; first, because she knows very little of English customs ; and secondly, because it brings her more immediately in comparison with an author, whose genius goes far beyond his century. It would have spoken more for her judgment, and been infinitely more for her reputation, had she followed the example of the American novelists, who, as far as their abilities would allow of it, have adapted the style and manners of Kenilworth to their national subjects.

Another unpleasant characteristic of Ger-

man writers, and one from which she is by no means exempt, is, that they describe with a minuteness of detail which can be compared to nothing but a Chinese painting ; whatever they have to describe, though of no importance in itself, is sure to be set forth with all its qualities, as if they were writing of that and that only, and however foreign these attributes may be to the immediate question. In short, they seemed to think that every thing which can be said with truth, may be said with propriety, no matter on what occasion.

But with all these drawbacks, I should think "The Outcasts" will not altogether be read without satisfaction ; there are some striking scenes, and some happy sketches of character, that set this little tale far above the generality of German Romances, and,

upon the whole, it is a singular appearance in Northern literature.

Of the translation itself, little need be said. As it is of course only intended for the English reader, and not for the scholar in German, I have allowed myself many deviations from the original; a liberty that must be excused in works of this description, to render them generally acceptable.

As to the notes and illustrations, though they may not be necessary to the reader, they were very necessary to the book, and for four especial reasons, which, in justice to all parties, I shall set down logically; first, because the sole end and aim of all reading, beyond an octavo, is to make a boast of it to the world, which has a prodigious admiration for the readers of quarto

and folio ; secondly, because the aforesaid notes and illustrations, being tolerably numerous, give my volumes a comely appearance, which, without them, would be as lean as a mummy when divested of its swathings ; thirdly, because most modern books are like kites in their nature ; not the bird so called, but that paper machine, which Johnson learnedly defines to be “ A fictitious bird made of paper ;” now, as the said kite will not fly without a tail of paper to balance its lightness, so the said modern volumes, being equally light, must have a tail of notes to keep them in *equilibrio*, and then, the moment they are puffed up by the popular breath, they mount aloft to the great admiration of all children, grown-up, or otherwise, and to the great benefit of the booksellers, who hold the string at the

other end. Fourthly and lastly, because it is the fashion; and why is it the fashion? for the three first causes. But this note-making, though I think it highly praise-worthy, may sometimes be carried too far, and the tail be made too large, as happened in the publication of ——— the other day, for the learned author of that opera, having appended too large a tail to it, the piece was only seen to rise a few yards from the ground, and after having wriggled in air for a short space, plumped down into the mud, from which it has never been able to lift its head since. However it will always stand as a memorial of the learning of an age, when even the operas are so abstruse, as to require notes at the foot of every other page; and though some envious folks may be apt to call them no better than so many

excrecences, I, for my part,—and I would have the crowd know so much—do look upon them as highly ornamental.

THE OUTCASTS.

CHAPTER I.

IT was on a misty autumnal morning that the inmates of a public house on the road from Leicester to London were summoned to the window by the tramp of many horses. Ralph Partridge, the host, immediately hurried out in the expectation of guests, and fixed his eyes constantly on their approach. A traveller, who had entered the inn a little before, now followed him, muffled up in a dark cloak, and shadowed by the broad brim of his hat; the former leant against the yard railings, while Ralph impatiently went out farther into the road, so that

he could plainly distinguish through the thick atmosphere a glittering train of horsemen and ladies.

An out-rider, in the livery of the Duke of Northumberland, while yet at a distance, called to Partridge, in an imperious tone, to get out of the way. — “Place there—Place!—The beautiful bride of Lord Guildford Dudley, and all the noble wedding-guests, will shortly pass by to Sion House, the future habitation of the youthful pair.” But, irresistibly impelled by curiosity, Ralph ventured in spite of the prohibition to maintain his place long enough to offer some refreshments to the minacious speaker, at the same time hinting that he might soon fetch up his lost way by a shorter cut. The servant, in his splendid livery, looked somewhat contemptuously upon mine host and the sign before his door, but nevertheless consented that a cup of the best wine should be brought out to him, seeing that the winding of the long cavalcade over a bend of the road of itself allowed a stop.

The wine came, and the servant, to escape from the eyes of his masters, retreated behind a pile of wood, over which he could peep, at the same time that he satisfied the anxious curiosity of Partridge, who, looking up to him laughingly, said, “ That is the bride, I suppose—that young thing there, in the cloth of gold trimmed with fur, and her veil down, from which her smiles glance like the sun-beams through a dropping mist; and that handsome man by her side in gold and purple, and the feathers in his hat, is no other than the young lord; I know him well; it is not long since he past this way with a prodigious hunting suite. But let me know who the others are, and above all that stern-looking man on the black horse. His yellow mantle falls down his back in rich folds, the white ermine of the collar lies right gracefully on his shoulders, and the black feathers stand loftily on his bonnet, that seems to sink too deep on his forehead and press together his shaggy eye-brows.”

“ That pale, withered man yonder?” whis-

pered the servant, and drew his horse still more aside, to get entirely out of his sight—"a little this way," he added, "that I may name to you my noble Duke of Northumberland, the father of the lord, whom he has just helped to a wife, and, if he have luck, to a crown."

"The crown of England?" exclaimed mine host, with a look of doubt.

"Even so," replied the other. "Look yonder at the new Duke of Suffolk, late Marquis of Dorset. The name and honours of his father-in-law were not given to him for nothing. If the daughter is a queen, he cannot well be other than a duke."

"I understand, I understand," replied Ralph thoughtfully. "That then is the new duke? Well, the *name* is allied to the royal blood; and, perhaps,—"

"The *man* too! the *man* too," interrupted the servant, who seemed well informed in the business. "I can assure you, we can tell the pedigree at our fingers' ends; since the marriage with

the beautiful lady nothing else is talked off in our house, and every lad down to the kitchen and the stables knows the right of Lady Jane Gray to the succession."

"Much," said Ralph, "is spoken about it here in the country. Travellers from London, traders, soldiers of the army, all are occupied with the king's sickness, and with talk of who is to wear the crown after him."

"Who is to wear the crown after him?" exclaimed the man on horseback readily. "He, I should think, who is appointed to it by the king: Do you think a man like my master builds his house on sand?—What! don't you know that Maria, the late king's sister, in giving her hand to Charles Branden, made him Duke of Suffolk?"

"Indeed! Indeed!" — exclaimed Partridge; "I knew him well, that Charles Branden;—a brisk man, who never had enough of marriage. He left the third wife a widow."

"But it is the first,—the first, that is now in

question. She is mother of the Marchioness of Dorset, and the grandmother of the young lady."

"So!" said the innkeeper thoughtfully, weighing the connexion in his mind.

"So!" replied the other.—"But I see Lord Guilford's horse going a quicker pace than I expected; I shall have trouble in catching him up. Farewell, mine host; ours is a steep ascent, and only mind, there's one in a short time will stand so high, that you'll think with shame of the paltry cup of wine you dared to offer him—So there an end, and again farewell."—And with this he fixed himself upright in the stirrups, and was about to give his horse the spur, when the stranger, who had hitherto been leaning against the railings, now crossed his path;—

"One word;—You often mentioned the name of Suffolk; pray, tell me, is not the lady in black with the long veil, ——"

"The widow of the late duke," interrupted the other, piecing out the sentence;—"quite right. By my troth," he added,—"one would take her

for the bride ; it would have surprised nobody, if she had brought to the son-in-law of her husband's daughter the name and title which he has now received from that daughter herself. It is said, moreover, that the widow's veil, which falls so stately over her shoulders, at the same time sits so uncomfortably on them, that——"

"Leaving this," interrupted the stranger, "it is of importance to me that I should have a conference with the lady this very day : be so good, therefore, as to take me with you to Sion House ; once there I can mix in the suite of the duchess, and shall easily get a hearing."

The dress of the stranger was so plain, and so little like a wedding-dress, that the consequential servant was still balancing whether he should grant his request, when the former mounted his horse, threw off his mantle, and appeared at his side in a habit, elegant, though modest.

"Much honour !" said the servant, glancing an eye of comparison from himself to the embroidered silk waistcoat, the laced ruff, and

knightly sword, of his neighbour. "Much honour!" he repeated, as they both trotted out of the court-yard along the road to Sion House.

Ralph Partridge followed them mechanically for a few paces. Suddenly he stopt, looked after the cavalcade, which now was visible only as a glimmering streak in the waving mist, and said, with a shake of the head, "I would I had been any thing but an innkeeper!—why, he is no better than a bed, a stool, a glass;—No sooner is he done with, then he is left, and folks go their way. What a devil of an occupation! that only irritates curiosity without ever satisfying it."

"Let not that grieve you," said a voice close behind Partridge; "Let not that grieve you; what the breast of man hides is for the most part only care and sorrow, or what has for its consequence both care and sorrow."

"Ha! Doctor Fagius!" exclaimed the innkeeper in surprise, "How is it I see you again? How is it you have left Cambridge? And which way lies your course?"

“ Beyond sea, mine honest host,” replied the other, drawing his cloak more tightly about him. “ It is a way that many more will seek ; but, mark my words, it will not remain open to many more.”

“ What do you mean by that ?” exclaimed Partridge, in a tone of wonder.

“ What do I mean by that ? I mean that Ralph Partridge will do well not to build too securely on the present. The king,” he added, almost in a whisper, as they walked on, “ the king is dying, and what will become of the reformed faith if the sceptre devolves to——”

“ Is it possible,” interrupted the host, “ that you should be so little acquainted with the history of the day ? Know you nothing of Lord Dudley and the beautiful Lady Jane ? Have you no better faith in the crafty Warwick, who as suddenly embraced one part as he had removed the protector Somerset, and raised himself to be Duke of Northumberland. Leave all to him ; trust me, he sees his way. Lady Jane Gray will

wear the crown ; the sceptre falls to her, as every child knows in the streets of London."

For a moment the mild pupil of Luther stood wrapt in thought. Involuntarily he raised his hands to heaven.

"The event is written there ; I know it not. But I should unwillingly witness the grief of the church, which is threatened with new attacks in this changeful country. Oh, my kind friend, that which you cite as a ground of comfort, you should rather fear as the occasion of fresh disturbance. King Edward's death will find much work for the executioner ; for, be it as it may, the rights of three women are in the scales, and the conquered is always a rebel."

"You would confound me," sighed the host, "if I did not find a consolation in the splendour of the new dynasty which just now past by us in all its strength and freshness. Truly you should have seen her, the beautiful bride of Dudley !"

"So much the worse for her and England, if she can win hearts and bribe the senses ; so

much the surer is the division, dear Ralph. Oh! it is with a heavy heart that I part from this poor kind land which received me so hospitably, and which, for six years, has been almost as dear to me as my native home. I part unwillingly, but I cannot stay."

"And whither go you?" asked Partridge, deeply moved, and pressing the doctor's hand convulsively in his own.

"Thither, whence I came—back to Strasburg. My horse stands in your yard; and I only went out to seek you—though I have few minutes now to spare—for herè I rested when the well-meaning Cranmer first called me over, thinking to work good through the influence of unbiassed strangers. He has no cause to be ashamed of his act; nor need he, because it has failed, repent his error. To those only who desire it can the moderate give a mode and measure; so long as there is strife amongst the multitude, the word of mediation is in vain."

"You may be right," replied the host, as he

opened the house-door ; “ but thus much I can assure you, the noble John A-Lasco, in London, has other expectations. Peter Martyr, too, your countryman, has a strong party at Oxford, and has got a firm footing there, as I hear from my sister’s son, who, with all his family, is devoted to the reformed faith.”

“ Do not name the Pole A-Lasco in reference to England ; he is the pastor of a foreign flock, and sooner or later departs with them all to some other country. As to what concerns Martyr and Bucer, both, like myself, Strasburgers, I can only pray that their unsuspecting eyes may be blinded by no illusion.”

Amidst these and other words of a similar nature, they had entered the great chamber near the entrance. The fire in the chimney, wrought into a lively flame by the dry wood heaped upon it, blazed cheerfully towards them from amidst the darker glow of the sea-coal ; and Doctor Fagius shook himself in his cloak, now wet from the fog, while, with his hand, he

brushed off the mist-drops, that the cloth might dry the sooner. Instead of taking the chair placed near the fire for him by Ralph, he remained standing at a distance, as if to inhale the mild heat of the fire. This gave him at the same time an opportunity of observing more narrowly, without rudeness, a stranger who was unknown to the host, and had come in during his absence. Such a guest might have surprised any one,—sitting there so silent, so wrapt up in himself, his downcast eyes fixed upon the fire, without a sign of social sympathy or even of common courtesy. Fagius, who had a clear insight into the circumstances of the time, and was familiar with its many springs and wheels, thought that he perceived in this man's gaze a treacherous eye, that would as fain remain undiscovered as go out on the discovery of others. Open in act no less than in thought, he came forward to the little crumpled figure, which hid its head and face in its hand, the withered arm being sup-

ported on its sharp and bony knee, and addressed it ;

“ If you travel through the night, my good sir, you must enjoy with me the comfortable fire here.”

The stranger motioned a little with his hand as if he would raise his head to meet the unwelcome intruder, but he contented himself with a slight movement, accompanied by an imperfect muttering. It was scarcely possible to make out the import of his words, but the tone alone was sufficient to confirm Fagius in his conjectures ; he, therefore, sate himself down to his breakfast in a corner of the chamber, opposite the chimney, being unwilling to give to the stranger a farther opportunity for peevish reply, or to Ralph an occasion for imprudent language. In the meantime many travellers came in and out, ate their morsel, and paid their attentive host more by news than by gold. Fagius examined every face, put together what he had heard, and drew to himself his own conclusions.

The silent guest in the chimney corner remained still without any motion except that of a little cup to his mouth, which, as he grasped it from above, was half concealed by his hand, while the lips hastily and slyly drew from it an occasional draught.

“Yonder is a papist,” whispered Dame Partridge to the doctor, as she cleared away the eggshells from his plate, and put before him a large slice of smoked meat,—“One of those,” she added, “who adhere to Gardiner, and who, to escape imprisonment, squat like hares, and yet are no where safe. I see it well by his sly manners, and the pursed-up eyes with which at times he flashes, like lightning, on the people, though he scarcely seems to observe them. That’s just the way of the people to whom he belongs.”

“To what faith then do you belong?” asked Fagius, declining the dame’s gifts, and grasping her hand cordially.

“Why, to the reformed,” was the answer; though, at the same time, a transient and anxious

blush coloured her cheek. "When every one here was full of the subject, and the world was hurrying after the foreign missionaries, with their liberty of conscience, who could have stayed behind? But," she added, half turning away from the doctor, "those of the old faith sometimes put us to it hardly, and liberty of conscience is not so good a thing after all as one would imagine. I often wish that I could confess to some one, so heavy is all within my breast. Ralph, indeed, laughs at this—Well; he has the knack of taking things easily."

So saying, she carried out the fragments of the breakfast; but soon returned, and seemed to busy herself much about the man by the fire, so that Fagius could not help drawing his own conclusions.

Several soldiers now came in, and called out impatiently for drink. In the midst of them they led a woman who had fetters on her hand and feet; she was large and well-formed, and stood with fearless carriage amongst the armed men,

while her eye seemed more intently fixed on invisible than visible things. The host drew one of the horsemen aside, and, as he filled his cup a second time, asked—"Who they had got with them?"

"A vagabond," replied the soldier, carelessly ; "every day we carry off her like by dozens, and are heartily sick of the trouble we have with this new proclamation about vagrants. One may know who is meant by the word ; the law is made for the strolling monks, and now and then one of their followers is caught in the net."

"A scorner of the reformed religion then?" said Partridge. The soldier nodded his head in the affirmative ; and, lifting up the cup to his mouth, added, without much regard to his prisoner, "she is certain of the stake." With this he pushed the mug aside, as if tired of drinking, and began to fumble in a little leathern bag for money to pay his reckoning. Ralph received the coin and passed it

over to his wife, who stood by and had not heard the last words without emotion.

"It is Jane of Kent," said another of the troop, coming up to them; "you must have heard of her I should think; she preached some strange stuff at Canterbury, and was arrested for it. People say the king would have pardoned her on the score of her sex, but that Bishop Cranmer set himself against it; so now she is pretty sure of burning."

Fagius got up from his seat in perturbation; his whole soul beamed in his mild eyes, which for a time were fixed on the countenance of the prisoner. After a few seconds of inward strife he approached her, and, laying his hand upon her forehead, said, with a gentle voice, "Christ help thee, poor creature!" The woman looked at him and smiled, but made no answer; and Fagius hurried out of the room to hide the emotions of his heart from the rude beings that surrounded him

“What sort of money do you call this,” exclaimed Dame Partridge, breaking in upon the strange silence that had followed the preacher’s exit; “it’s bad, and wont go.”

“Once set it a-going,” said the soldier, with a loud laugh,—“and I warrant you it goes from hand to hand like any other silver; I had it from those belonging to the king or to his council, who coined it.”

“What!” cried the enraged hostess, “are we to be plundered of every thing?—of our hard-earned profits, as well as of the pictures in our churches? Is it not enough that the tapers are extinguished on our altars, that we may not light them at Candlemass, nor carry palms on Palm-Sunday, nor ashes on Ash-Wednesday, and must moreover change our notes and ill use those from whom before we had comfort and salvation? Would you, in addition to all this, palm your bad money on us, and are we bound to put up with it in silence?”

“Be still, woman, for your own sake, I had-

visé you," said the leader of the party. "Do you know what you are drawing on yourself by your chattering? Would you share the fate of this maniac here?"

"Fear not," exclaimed the prisoner sternly; "fear not, when the Spirit bids you speak. The Lord is with those who contend for his church; but if your contention is for worldly good alone, then curb your unholy zeal and the tongue that is its servant."

"Break up! Break up!" exclaimed the leader of the troop, interfering; "or we shall have a sermon of an hour from this volunteer priestess. So fare you well, Master Partridge, keep your Dame in better order and your house in good repute."

The terrified host looked up in wonder to his wife, who, anticipating his words and boiling with rage, screamed out, "Ho! Ho! Let them seize me and tie me to the stake, the false coiners; at least, they know what I think of them; on that score I owe them nothing. What do they mean by pretending to pure doctrines,

forsooth, while they practice the old vices? Good God! Have I denied the Holy Father and foresworn confession only to see the fire-brand and the axe in the hands of those who were to break our bonds? And what sort of bonds were they, Ralph? Whom did they gall? Or did they gall any one before the quarrel began amongst the bishops? Oh, it is from that quarrel that all our misery has arisen!—Would that you had never filled my head with your nonsense! that I had never heard the preaching of the Pole A-Lasco, or the gentle seductive words of our guest; I had then been an orthodox believer instead of tormenting myself with the thought of having bartered away my soul for a bit of bad silver! for just like this coin”—and she flung it down upon the table —“just like this coin are the new doctrines; at the last day heaven will reject them, and we shall find ourselves taken in then precisely as we are now.”

“And all this,” said Ralph, sitting down exhausted by the torrent of her words; “all this

is for the sake of a paltry piece of money which you happen to fancy is not good! It is true," he added, in a conciliating tone, as the anger flashed from her eyes, "it is true, that the coin is really not good—it has the full weight, but not the proper purity of metal. It originated with the Protector Somerset, who issued this sort of money to pay the army which was then in the field against the Scots and Catholics. Since then it has got into circulation, and from the troops passing through the country has come down to us. But do not let that fret you too much, dame; it is always in the power of the inn-keeper or the tradesman to gain in the price of his goods what he loses in the mode of payment."

"You do but half understand me," replied the wife, somewhat softened; "it is true I am vexed at this unexpected cheat; but say, yourself, is it not enough to distract us when we find ourselves deceived by those we have trusted, and trusted more perhaps than was fitting? If they out-reach us in lesser things, why not in the main

point also?—And then the woman!—the poor woman! My hair stands on end when I think on the words of the soldier who was dragging her to the stake. What! is it thus they outrage others for not thinking with themselves, they who pretend to deliver man from bondage?—And do we not daily see numbers of poor wretches stealing past here, scarcely daring to enjoy the relief that is offered to them by humanity?—Even now—God be praised, he is in safety!”—and she pointed to the vacant place by the fire,—“ Even now I have seen another of these oppressed creatures seeking a refuge beneath our roof and again driven forth to wander. If an angel had not taken him into his guard, he must have fallen into the hands of the barbarians.”

“ It is no angel, my good woman, that saved the poor fugitive,” exclaimed Fagius, who now entered the room; “ it is one of those whose extravagant zeal you have abused with zeal no less extravagant.”

The hostess seemed ashamed, but Fagius without noticing it continued ;

“ I know the man well ; it is Day, Bishop of Chichester. He was concealed by Mary in her castle, and she has not sent him abroad without some object. Rely upon it, the matter with which she has intrusted him weighs heavily in the scale that is to decide the fate of England. I must turn my back upon this trembling island ; and do you be upon your guard, lest it slip from beneath your feet. Farewell,” he repeated, looking to Ralph as he went out ; at the same time he drew him aside a few paces and pressed a sealed paper into his hand.—“ This is the last stay that I know of for you and others who profess the reformed religion. To Hatfield ! To Elizabeth !—You understand ?” he added emphatically ; then giving his right hand to Partridge, he mounted his horse that waited to carry him to the nearest sea-port.

CHAPTER II.

THE harp and the violin were silent, and night mantled Sion House in its shadows. Still, however, the pale lamp-light glimmered in one window which looked out from a round tower on the white freestone of the castle-yard. Over this the storm was sweeping ; the casements trembled as if shaken by violent blows, and the wind howled through the fastenings. So loud was the uproar that it completely drowned the sound of a stranger's footing, who, slowly and carefully ascended the winding stair-case, followed the dark passage, and at length reached the chamber, guided by the light from its half-open door. He entered, and sank at the feet of the loveliest of her sex, who, with suppressed delight and feigned displeasure, withdrew the hand that he ventured to cover with burning kisses.

“ Think not, Richard,” said the lady, in an

earnest although tender voice, "that I can ever forgive your bold intrusion into a strange house amongst people who are only too much inclined to wound me by ill report. What hopes have I ever held out to you that could embolden you to such a measure? or do you think to bend my will to yours, and to force from the confusion of surprise what a prudent consideration of circumstances withholds?"

"Say no more, fair Duchess," said the youth, with a careless smile; "say no more, or you will entangle yourself in your own words. Leave me to guess, or even to pronounce, what it is that *a prudent consideration of circumstances withholds*. Oh, if only prudence closes those sweet lips, love will soon unfold the mystery. Yes, Catherine, on my soul you love me—deny it not.—See; the poor Richard Bertie, of a decayed family, strange to the world, unknown to men, has nothing, knows nothing, wishes for nothing but yourself, the divinity of his life on earth. Can you in your abundance withdraw

that hand, which by the lightest touch of its fingers stays the pulses of his heart, sucks the blood from his veins, and strains his breast with unutterable and breathless hope? Am I to believe that the proud widow of the Duke of Suffolk only endured the friend of her solitude at Barbican, and that her judgment and affections are as changeful as the changeful form of circumstance to which she allows so great an influence? Am I to believe that the cold air of this castle has dried up, without a trace, the tears with which you dismissed me in the evening on the threshold of your door? Is it merely the sport of accident that has brought me to this chamber, and laid me at your feet? Tell me, is it a dream, my finding your door open at the present hour? Am I to think it was some mocking sylph brought the summons which allured me hither? Why, Catherine, awake such doubts in my breast, when you gave me better expectations?"

"Sarah!" exclaimed the Duchess, calling

out to her waiting-woman ; “ tell this arrogant man the cause of my present summons.”

“ What other cause,” replied the prudent maiden, “ but to dismiss you, Sir Richard? An express desire, it is trusted, you will obey—it is necessary that you should avoid a place to which so many idle eyes are directed. The noble Duchess believes that she deserves so much respect, at least, as to be spared the terrors of an unwelcome surprise. She is resolved not to be again exposed to the scoffs of proud relations, nor does she intend a second time to blush and tremble before one whom her favour should have made more modest. Such an alarm as that of the past morning she will not go through again. What! to look round in full security and meet, close beside her, an eye that seeks her boldly and confidently, and, not content with driving the blood from her cheeks, desists not till it is observed and commented on by the proud Northumberland!”

“ What are you doing, Sarah?” exclaimed

the Duchess, angrily; "see! how his colour goes! and his eye is moist with tears!—Your words are so harshly chosen!"

"They are your Grace's own words," replied the maiden. "Full ten times you repeated them to me yourself, and bade me take particular care that I did not forget a single one of them."

Sir Richard arose and stood upright before the Duchess;—"I go, your Grace, for, in truth, my pride equals my love. An unworthy one shall not have to boast your favour. I go, with the feeling—" he paused a moment, unable to proceed;—at last, the words trembled from his lips,—"I go! with the feeling that you love me notwithstanding. Yes, Catherine, yes; you have truly loved me!—and that you may not be ashamed of me I quit you now for ever."

Saying this he rushed to the door, when a faint exclamation of "Richard! Richard!" was muttered by two pale lips that were almost closed

by pain and terror. He turned round—"Can you forgive my rashness?" She smiled; "Here to *forgive* is the same as to *give* myself, dear Richard: but I see it well, it cannot be otherwise; why therefore torment myself and you? The considerations that at first frightened me are easier to be borne than this rebellious heart, which always is heavy when it does not beat in your neighbourhood. Take then my hand, Richard; I can no longer use it, and it might soon else rest in the grave without being a profit to any one."

"Catherine!" exclaimed the transported Bertie, "Is it real?—will you indeed be mine?—wholly mine?—the adored wife of the too-happy Richard?—O say in positive, irrevocable words, that it is so."

"I have said it," replied the Duchess; "and, what is more, I thought it long ago without finding words to say it. When I left Barbican it was quite clear to me, but your unexpected appearance here, in the midst of my relations,

somewhat staggered me; I attributed to cunning calculation, what, in fact, originated in passion, and that, Richard, finds in me a gentle judge."

It was thus they conversed together, attempting to explain to each other that which, in fact, is inexplicable. Sarah listened to all in doubt, and at last said, "I see the proverb holds; there is no marriage made but another is determined. May you be a luckier bridegroom than this Lord Guilford. If I may advise you, you will haste to leave this castle before any one suspects your engagements with her Grace; for heaven knows I trust none of the crafty faces which I see creeping about in passages and ante-rooms; nay, in our very chambers, at the table and in the church, on the watch to betray each other. Let them go on to their ruin, and do you rescue your happiness in the silence of retirement."

"Sarah is right," said the Duchess. "Go, Richard, and order all things in my house, as its master, for the wedding; in a few days I shall

follow you, and then only death can divide us, who, I trust, will long be a stranger to the threshold of Castle Barbican. How, Richard? are you discontented? Does any thing in my words displease you?"

Richard, who had been looking down before him, as if in a dream, was moved almost to tears ;—" Ah, my dear Catherine, let me enjoy the soft peace of these hours, nay, this hour itself, as though it were an eternity, that knew nothing of change or separation. There are so few moments when the full accord is struck in the heart of man ! who would not dwell upon the sweet sound through all its vibrations, until the last echo had died away ?"

" You are so moved on the sudden, so earnest, my friend," exclaimed the Duchess, with a searching look. " Is it any foreboding, Richard, that awakes these unusual feelings? I look in vain in your eyes for the resolved joy of my betrothed."

" Because it lies too deeply in my heart,"

replied Richard, with a soft pressure of her hand ; "and do not, oh, do not hasten so restlessly over the present ; the clouds yonder in the east open early enough, it is day before we think of it, and, while the soul is yet cradled in the fairy-ring of fancy, the hour strikes that fate has measured out to man."

His words fell heavily on the breast of the Duchess. Instead of their still more exalting to her the magic of the moment, as they should have done, she felt a deep anxiety at her heart, and turned in silence to the window.

"It is true," she said at length ; "it is true that the hours of happiness roll quickly by. How often has the conviction occurred to me this day, and in this house ; with its strange commotions. Only look," she added, beckoning Bertie to her side, "only look how the towers, seen from the side, rise up dark and colourless into the grey mist, as if their turrets mingled in the pale dance of spirits that flitter over them like a

fleecy rack. Richard, I fear some evil is descending on this house. See to ; yonder, where the windows look out into the night like eyeless sockets, is the bride's bed-chamber ; is it not as if death had extinguished the marriage torch ? I shudder whenever I turn that way, and yet fear always seeks the thing it fears."

Bertie stood with folded arms, his eyes fixed on the window, without however being immediately able to occupy his attention with foreign objects. His breast was filled by the sudden impression of things beyond expectation ; and wavering, between two worlds, he unwillingly saw himself recalled to the dark and deceitful recollections of reality. It was, nevertheless, in his nature to burst by a sudden bound from this dreamy state, to which he too much inclined, and break up his visionary bodings in the immediate present. With a sly smile, and winding his arm about the Duchess, he said, " So far from being reminded of death here, I only see

the young morning of a new life rising up out of the darkness. By Heavens! Lady Jane's bright eyes scatter a thousand beams on the path of the fortunate Dudley!—But, what is that? Is it not light yonder already? Only look, Catherine; are there not torches throwing a flickering blaze on the casement from behind the curtains?"

"The light moves up the winding stair-case to the chamber of the Duke who, no doubt, is restless on the King's account. Most probably some message from that quarter."

"If it were indeed so, your prophecy of death might have really come to pass."

"In the name of Heaven," cried the Duchess, with an involuntary shudder; "of whose death are you speaking?"

"Of whose but of the King's?" replied Richard, in astonishment. "Yesterday, on the road hither, as I was walking my horse not far from a village inn, that he might cool before he went into the stable, I met a little half-frozen

old man, who entered the hamlet with myself. He was on foot, and, besides that his exterior was needy, had a strange shyness that would hardly let him look from the ground, so bent was his figure as he crept along and, as it were, squeezed together on the edge of the road. Disliking such a neighbour, I remained on the opposite side of the way, but involuntarily glanced at him more frequently and keenly than I was myself aware of. Perhaps it annoyed him, for twice he stopped, but when I did the same partly from spleen, and partly from curiosity, and looked back after him, he immediately redoubled his steps as if he were anxious to avoid all suspicion. Now then I knew the bird by his feathers ;—you are, I thought to myself, one of the priests who wander about in disguise, exposed by the late edict to the mercy of informers. Poor fellow, you'll not escape your judges, I added, gazing on the wretched figure with feelings of pity that were more excited by his helplessness than by the class to which he

probably belonged. Perhaps something of this sort was visible in my face, and that might give him courage, for he lifted up his head and ventured to examine me narrowly. I asked him, with a smile, if he were going to Sion House to the celebration of young Dudley's nuptials?—'I? I!—to Sion-house! to a nuptial festival!'—replied a hollow voice, that was scarcely audible; 'Heaven best knows what festival awaits the poor inhabitants of this land. The bad state of the King! much depends on the last declaration of those sick lips!'—'Who are you?' said I, leading my horse nearer to him, 'and what do you know of the King's condition?'—'Leave me,' he replied, stretching out his bony hand to bid me from him; 'you are without any object, I see it by your face; mere curiosity urges you; but, curb this idleness, and do not cross my way. Believe me, things will not be as they were; times like these sweep on generations to their ruin. Stain not yourself with treachery, for the hour of requital may come ere man expects it, and the

many will then find that they knew not what they wished. But it is not yet time,'—he continued, breathing heavily,—‘ it is not yet time to show you how the reformers have turned the heads of the people. Ride on, young sir, ride on, and trouble not yourself on my account. I must steal my anxious heart and aged limbs through marsh and moor, and creep before those who, without inspecting it, are working onwards to their own destiny.’

“ Although I recognised in these words the crafty threatening priest, they yet made an unpleasant impression upon me in spite of my inclination. ‘ Confidence for confidence,’ said I; ‘ why, if you belong to those who are struck too hardly by a stern law, why do you not leave a land that rejects you with so much bitterness? Is not the church your real home?’—‘ True is it,’ replied the priest, ‘ but are we not bound to maintain it there where the Lord has grounded it? And we will maintain it, rely you upon that. It shall stand more gloriously than ever on that

very spot of all the earth which has served the antichrist for his flagitious projects. Perhaps the moment is even now at hand; or, perhaps, providence has yet again removed it, for I almost fear that means have been found to seal those lips I spoke of, before it was heaven's purpose they should be closed.'

" 'What do you mean by that?' I exclaimed warmly; but several horsemen now appearing in the road, he struck off towards a thicket, and said in a confidential tone, 'Think of me; we shall soon hear of the king's death, for they will not let him live long enough to recal his extorted declaration.'

" 'What declaration?' I would have asked, but he had already disappeared amongst the copse-wood."

"Dear Richard," said the Duchess, "you have stumbled on a dangerous subject, who seems too well informed of every thing not to have had a hand in the great game of public events. There are many men of weight now that creep

about the country with the staff and satchel, seeming intent only on the support of wretched existence. Your travelling companion was evidently one of those who venture more than is ever done for mere personal interest; a mightier spring is at work here, and that is, Mary."

"The heiress to the crown, if King Edward should really die before a sister so much his elder."

"If he should die!" repeated the Duchess thoughtfully. "My good friend, his death— But see"—and her countenance changed—"What a stir there is yonder in the wing of the castle. The Duke must have received some news of consequence! Lights fill his chamber, and people are hurrying to and fro. If I mistake not, I hear too the neighing of horses in the court-yard, and a bustle amongst the servants. Go, Sarah, see what is the matter, and bring me back word directly."

"May I be allowed to speak?" said the confidante; but without waiting for an answer, she

added quickly, "I would recommend your Grace not to detain Sir Richard here any longer in an hour like the present, nor to expose yourself or him to the unwelcome interruption of a third person ; still less is it advisable to keep the door locked at a time when something unusual is breaking in upon the repose of the castle."

"My evil counsellor," said Richard, "are you so weary of your wisdom that you would squander it upon the ungrateful? Keep your prudence for yourself, and let us enjoy that happy folly which makes the present too delightful for us to think of the future."

"Sarah is right. There is every appearance of a general breaking up in a few minutes. The Duke is evidently leaving the castle ; just now I recognised his gaunt figure with the tall stiff feathers in his cap, amongst the torches above that were lighting him down the stairs. Hasten, therefore, dear Bertie, that you may leave Sion House with the tumultuous swarm of his retinue, before your presence excites doubts

which hasty rumour might spread abroad with unpleasant misrepresentations."

"Ah, Catherine, it has been said that folly is infectious, but here prudence has had less trouble to win you than folly. Is it that she exercises her wonted influence over your will? or is it that the still inclination of the heart does not resist her?"

"You would do better," interrupted Sarah, "to envy her Grace for that which you do not possess, than to make it a subject of accusation. Without these complaints the old lady whom your presence scared away, had never left us, and her Grace needed not to have feared that she had offended her."

"What is it you are chattering?" cried the Duchess impatiently, "But hush!—By my troth there is a rattling at the lock of the outer door!—Some one calls too!—It is the little thin voice of my daughter-in-law, Dorset, who, I can hear, has been reminded by something, that her mother was the child of Henry the Seventh.

Stay not another moment, Bertie, but slip through this private door into the under chambers of the domestics. I'll engage that none of them are there now; curiosity has collected every one in the hall; and, indeed, the Duke's sudden remove would have wakened the soundest sleepers. And you, Sarah, open the door without to the Marchioness.—So, now she is gone, and one short moment is yours, Richard. Farewell, my beloved; soon, very soon, I shall follow you.—Nay, do not look at me so doubtfully, nor trouble the recollection of the transient happiness that has smiled on us within these walls.”

“The transient happiness! Yes, indeed; that word rightly paints the flight of the few moments that have rustled by us. But this hurry, the tumult below, the pressing and being prest, my secret stealing away—all this bears too much the face of doubtful right. Should it be an augury of evil? Shall I lie in wait and steal my fortune? No, I will deserve it in the sight of day or not possess it at all.”

“ Richard! Richard! reckon not so arrogantly with Fortune for her favours. Is this the time to contend about contingencies?—Enough, you have my word.—Oh, no more, incredulous one.—Do you not hear the quick steps of the impatient Sarah?”

“ Ha, this Sarah!—If she should—”

“ No more, for heaven’s sake!” exclaimed the Duchess, with all the tokens of inward anxiety. She hurried him into the dark passage, and had scarcely let fall again the Flanders tapestry, when a door flew open at the other end of the lofty chamber, and Lady Francisca Dorset entered, the wife of the late-created Duke of Suffolk. With a mixture of self-satisfied pride and wonted adulation, she addressed the Duchess with, “ Was your Grace awakened by the great news, or did the report find you awake with other occupations?”

There was something, as usual, of such doubtful interpretation in Francisca’s face, that it was uncertain whether by her last word she meant to

hint at any thing in the Duchess, or was only occupied with the important occasion that had called her forth in such an hour. The cautious Catherine, however, adopted the latter explanation, as she quietly replied, "The fortunes of your house, Francisca, which can never cease to be mine, gave me much to think of that kept me awake; and, of course, the renewed tumult in the castle, when I imagined all had gone to sleep, could not escape me. But tell me what has driven you up from your bed, and surprised me with the favour of this nocturnal visit?"

The Marchioness repeated the last words with a significant smile, adding, "In good truth, widows, like my fair mother, have reason to be upon their guard, and, indeed, I found your door so well bolted that nothing—not even my news—could gain admittance. O ho! Is that the custom too at castle Barbican? and has the jealous providence of my father accustomed you to such close precautions?"

"I honour your father's memory too highly

to answer his daughter such a question," replied the Duchess, with subdued indignation.

"Good God!" retorted Francisca, smiling; "why is it you are always so out of temper with me? Don't you see that I would willingly keep to myself my newly-acquired title of Duchess of Suffolk, and wish a better fate for your youth than this cold widowhood? But then the question is, who can presume to ally himself with the mighty stem that is pushing forth its blossoms as high as to the throne of England; for, your Grace should know King Edward is dead—that is, dead to us who are in the mystery, though the world thinks no other than that he is pining on a sick bed, and can at pleasure alter his resolve in regard to the succession."

"Dead! the King dead!" said the Duchess, turning pale; "and you tell it with so much indifference,—Gracious Heavens!—as if the cold wind that in him had separated soul from body would touch only his being! Are you so inexperienced that you do not see in the faded glory

of the royal countenance the dimming of the new stars that must now sink into darkness and oblivion. A morning is indeed about to rise on us, but are you clear-sighted enough to say where that morning shall break ?”

“ I think,” replied Francisca, looking up proudly, “ that I know Sion House well enough to find the chamber of Lady Jane Gray even in the dark. *That* morning, my too-cautious mother, has risen upon you as unexpectedly as the real day ; you were, probably, better employed, and fancied it was some thousand miles off when it was already here.”

“ Leave this war of words, Francisca, and these lurking allusions ; you know I am not patient of them, and could, if I wished it, strike a note, at which the ducal coronet would dance off sadly from the brows of your husband. But setting this aside ; I love Jane as the dear grandchild of the Duke, my husband,—and no less for herself, for her sweet and innocent soul, whose beautiful dwelling exercises an involun-

tary influence over the hearts of men. No one more sincerely wishes her good fortune than I do; but is it fit, Francisca, to build on it so proudly? Do you forget that Mary and Elizabeth are to be reckoned as rivals for the throne? And do you think that the first will not be able to make good her right, founded as it is on her father's will?"

"Take you no care for that," said the Marchioness, with her usual thoughtless security; "whatever grounds you may have to deem the gloomy Catholics of greater power and influence, yet trust to the crafty Northumberland, he is a match for them; and learn, my fair Duchess, since we are upon the subject, that this arrogant pretender, this child of an unallowed marriage, is in secure custody. She was cunningly enticed up to London to see her brother, when he was already dead, and being there—"

"Marchioness, you know all as minutely as if you had had a hand in the game."

The Marchioness corrected herself—"I did

not say that it *was so* actually, but that it *was said to be so*; at least, the council had decided on such measures, and it is to be presumed that it carried its resolves into execution."

"Say, rather, the Duke of Northumberland, and leave the council out of the question; for that, believe me, consists of more than one party. As, therefore, you are not certain that Mary is a prisoner,—but, suppose she is; do you overlook Elizabeth, the sensible daughter of the fair Anne Boleyn?"

"The darling of the Protestants," replied the Marchioness. "Do you fear her? or wish for her? for really, your Grace, it is hard to know on what ground one stands with you. When we consider that Lady Willoughby, your mother, was a Spaniard, and came over here with Catherine of Arragon, we might be inclined to think that the Catholic blood in your veins would rise against all who profess the reformed doctrines. Yet, on the other hand, you are seen in intercourse with them, and many

declarations have been heard from your lips that, to Papists, at least, would seem doubtful. Though, perhaps, you would not like to break quite with Mary, who was attached to your mother to the grave, yet I think you would, for many reasons, rather see the free-thinker Elizabeth on the throne."

"If you believe my wishes, in regard to England's Queen, to be regulated by private interests, I do not see what should make you doubt my sympathy for Lady Jane. I know that, young as she is, she has studied with much zeal the fathers of the church in the original, and has laboured with unwearied industry so to build up her understanding as that she may gain a clear insight into the labyrinth of the present religious errors. If you must make me of one or the other party, you ought to deem me most devoted to that Queen who seems to be the proper mediator between the two faiths, and who is, moreover, my relation. But I cannot help trembling for a being who is

too purely and delicately formed for the wild discords of times like these. God grant that I may be in error! yet my heart is faint; the King's death sits heavily upon it!—so young a King!—so fair and amiable!—so well disposed and anxious for the welfare of his people. Oh, Francisca, we well know what is buried with such a King, but we know not what we shall find in his successor! I will not conceal it from you, here there is no longer any rest for me; for the present the nuptial solemnities are ended at Sion House, and I return to Barbican. Fare you well, therefore, till I am summoned by Lady Jane. The pleasures or the burden of a crown will shortly make her need my friendship."

"It is true, then, what has been whispered abroad and pretty loudly," said the Marchioness, laughing; "Castle Barbican is not to remain so solitary and joyless as the Duchess of Suffolk at first taught us to imagine? The muses have taken up their abode there, and chosen the

handsomest men of the neighbourhood for their patrons. One of these, a poor nobleman of more ancestors than acres, I hear, is the lucky favourite. He is said to have adduced, with irresistible eloquence, his former patience in poverty, and, as a proof that he did not preach to deaf ears, has gained for his prize the hand of the rich lady of Barbican."

The Duchess smiled as she said, "You repeat the gossipings of rumour like a parrot. I wish you joy, that your daughter's fate so little troubles you ; but, in truth, since the premature death of Edward and the mysterious actions of the powerful Northumberland, I do not find in myself the least room for your speeches ; they are scattered to the wind without touching me, and you may therefore spare your wit, my dear. As to what is going on at castle Barbican, you have nearer cares, and let them occupy your thoughts, for sooner or later Jane will claim your whole attention. Yet, again, I wish you

may prosper ; and now allow me that short repose which the present tumult of your feelings will not let you taste yourself."

" In good truth, your Grace is more candid than civil," replied Francisca, with somewhat of malice in her manner ; but again her tone changed, and with all the signs of an anxiety that would not be suppressed, she continued, " I would obey your admonition did I not know that you are as good as wise, and will not bring yourself to desert a mother in the moment of her greatest need. You are aware," she added, forgetting all other considerations ; " you are aware that a crown is at stake—a crown, your Grace ! and this is yet wavering in the uncertain hands of the council. No one returns from the Tower, and yet more than an hour has elapsed since the Duke and Northumberland went thither to manage the arrest of Mary, who was expected every moment.—Oh, how the blood rebels against the will !" she cried, starting from her seat ; " I thought myself stronger than I prove

to be.—But now it beats, pulse upon pulse, at my heart. This Mary!—Good Heavens! how much trouble we had to get her out of the head of the conscientious Edward!—‘He would observe the will of his father!—of his father, who changed his will, as he did his opinion, with the change of every day. And he himself—the poor Edward!—did he know on which side was the right? I think the younger daughter of King Henry the Seventh is as well descended as her brother himself, and the throne of England is fitter for her daughter or her grandchild than for that monster of an incestuous wedlock. He, who can doubt this, is to be pitied; the assembled clergy have proved sufficiently for English consciences, that the brother’s widow had only been the mistress of a brother, not his wife. And that which was then valid, can it now be recalled?—Tell me,”—and she planted herself impatiently before the Duchess,—“tell me, what do you think of the transaction?”

“I think that if you have not the *Power*, it

is hazardous to talk of *Right*. The poor *Right*! you know well, Francisca, how it may be twisted. But, under circumstances, apparently so favourable to your claims, why do you not assert those claims for yourself? Wherefore should you load the burthen of a crown on a child's weak head, instead of vigorously maintaining in your own person that which you know how to forward so boldly?"

"You can only ask such a question to shame me," answered the Marchioness, with warmth; "the irresolution of the feeble Dorset can not be, a secret to you, his near relation, any more than the interested aid of Warwick. What could I have done without him? or what would he have done if half the prize, at least, had not been left to him? Dudley scarcely numbers seventeen years; Jane, sixteen. What a period opens itself to one who has no intention of letting the protectorship slip out of his hands again."

"Poor woman," sighed the Duchess, with a melancholy look at Francisca; "how have they

twisted the clue out of your hands, and bound them with its threads ! You are caught, believe me, and have not even the satisfaction of being a solitary sacrifice. You give them Jane's lovely youth into the bargain ; the dear child will wither before she has blossomed."

" I recognise you, Catherine, in every word ; I recognise you," exclaimed the indignant Marchioness, with a voice half choaked with passion. " After bearing a son to the Duke, you could never forgive me, that my mother was the daughter of a king, and my kindred allied to the throne. You have always entertained for me so ill-concealed an aversion that I could not but feel it, and to avoid your constant insults was obliged to abandon my father's house."

" You did, indeed, Francisca, and with such pride, with such marked scorn, as if my father, Count Willoughby, had not been the ninth in the succession of this title. I did not love you ; we were little suited to each other ; nature forms

every one of distinct materials, and our elements are not allied. We have only, therefore, to lament the connexions which torment us with an external kinship, for the late step-mother *was* a torment to you, and still more so were the sons which she bore your father. But Heaven loved these, at least, too much to expose them to the hate of their nearest relatives ; they rest in peace by the side of the good Duke, and with them the last cause of division between us is extinguished. Why then should you reach over their graves to sting a heart that bears no ill-will towards you ? Why——”

At this moment their altercation was interrupted by the sound of hasty steps in the ante-chamber, and the voice of a man, in strong emotion, exclaimed, “ How ! do you loiter here in idle talk, instead of assisting me with your daughter ? ”

“ Heavens ! ” cried the Marchioness, “ What is amiss with Lady Jane ? ”

“ Nothing is amiss with her ? ” replied the

Duke, laughing, while care and displeasure agitated his pale features; "by mine honour, nothing is amiss with her; she is only too well off, and would madly fling away her abundance."

"How! I will not believe that my child can be so ungrateful to the bounty of Heaven!—Speak, Warwick,—say, is it what I scarcely dare to name—is it—"

"The crown!" interrupted the Duke. "Do you think I return with empty hands to Sion House? But, come, let us not waste the precious moments in words; they are numbered, my good Marchioness, for Mary is not our prisoner. Some traitor informed her of her brother's death on her way to the Tower, and she fled back again to Kenning Hall. For the last half hour your noble husband, Pembroke, and many members of the Council, have been in vain striving to persuade Lady Grey to accept the crown. Pale, like a lily in a night-storm, she leans her head on Dudley's breast, looking up

into his blue eyes as if she had no understanding but for their language. If we press her to decide, she clasps her little hands convulsively, and protests she has no idea of the office which we would force upon her, not to speak of fulfilling its duties. She weeps and struggles like a bird in the cage; go therefore, Marchioness, and put an end to the business, for, by Heavens! the throne of England must not remain unoccupied a quarter of an hour longer."

"Oh, King Henry! King Henry!" cried the Marchioness, quite beside herself; "awake in thy grand-daughter! Breathe courage into her soul, and eloquence into her lips, and do not suffer the house of Lancaster to be stained by a bastard!—Come, mother," she added, turning to the Duchess, and grasping her hand strongly; "come, you too have a near interest in the elevation of the family of Suffolk; help me to make the little Jane wiser than her fears."

"I will follow you directly," said the Duchess, who was not inclined to take any part in a busi-

ness which seemed to her as uncertain in its results as it was dazzling in the present. The Marchioness cast an indignant look at her, and, whispering with a malicious laugh something into the Duke's ear, hurried as quickly as possible down the steps to her daughter's chamber.

"They will overcome her at last," said the Duchess to herself; "they will catch the timid doe, confine her within bounds, teach her a part, and endeavour to deceive the world. And will you, Mary, look on quietly at a distance? Will your powerful faction remain inactive? Poor, poor Jane!"

"Come, your Grace, come quickly," cried Sarah, who now entered the room; "they are all on the way to the Tower, and will you be the last to accompany Lady Jane?"

"To the Tower, Sarah? Have you heard rightly, or do I misunderstand you?"

"In truth, I can believe that your hearing may have been impaired by the tongue of the

Marchioness, but for this time it has not deceived you. There was so much anxious hurry, and bustling, and whispering, in Sion House, and the words *Dead and New Government* crossed so from all sides, that I at last became curious, and looked a little into the meaning of it all. And first, the Marchioness, the paleness of death in her face and her knees tottering under her, past by me across the hall into the lower chamber, where, immediately on her entrance, there arose a great clamour; many voices were loud, and her's amongst them. I heard afterwards from Martha, the bride's nurse, that she, poor thing, shook in every limb at the sight of her mother, and that the tears poured down her lovely face while she covered it with her hands, and exclaimed, 'No more of this detestible proposal; let me hear no more of it.' And then she raised her hands in prayer to her tormentors,—'Have pity on my youth! Are there no other means of reconciling fate? Does it so soon look with envy on my happiness?'

And, as the nurse assured me, with these words she wound both her arms with irresistible grace about the neck of her young husband, who knelt by her chair, and, full of his father's spirit, spoke boldly and proudly for both, combating her arguments, and entreating her to yield to the wishes of her friends. Martha, who told us this, and many similar things of Lady Jane's agony, and had been glad to withdraw herself from the painful sight of this unequal contest, thus gave vent to her feelings, and moved us to tears by her tale, without well knowing what sort of promise would eventually be extorted from this tender being that was scarcely ripening out of childhood; at this moment the mother of the lady dropt like a tempest through the midst of the anxious household; her eye lightened with tumultuous joy, and a deep crimson flushed her cheeks, that were still wet with her first tears of anger, while the chin and corners of her mouth were quivering with strong excitement. 'Away,' she stam-

mered,—‘away, ye clods!—Is this your service to your new Queen, standing here with your hands in your pockets, and idly gaping on that which you do not comprehend? Haste, and throw yourselves at the feet of England’s sovereign ; you have no time to lose, for we are conducting her to the Tower, to the royal dwelling of all her ancestors. Well! why do you stare at me so incredulously? Alas, my kind people,’ she continued, with weeping voice,—‘Alas! you know not that your King died this night. Yes, the good Edward!—My poor cousin ;’—and she held up a handkerchief to her eyes and sobbed,—‘He who wished so well to all, and only a few days before his death directed the establishment of spitals and almshouses ; who gave such sums to charitable institutions ; he as wise for his age as just towards his people ; he it was that bequeathed the crown to Lady Jane. My good friends,’ she added, looking around her gently and affec-

tionately, 'fail not to spread this abroad in the streets, as the procession moves towards the Tower.'"

"Stop, Sarah," exclaimed the Duchess, breaking off the stream of the narration; "I am weary of this farce, and you lose the opportunity of seeing the Queen pass on her ominous way through the people. Go, in God's name, and I will wait here for you; this perilous fortune causes me more tears of sorrow than of joy."

"They are gone," replied Sarah; "and, in truth, it was more like a funeral than a festival. Lady Jane, faint and colourless, like one dying, dropped her head upon her breast as if the golden round already weighed her to the earth. Her hand too lay powerless in that of the proud Dudley, who triumphantly lifted her up on her horse, and glanced about him with an air that might perhaps increase his youthful beauty in the eyes of a tender bride, for she tried to laugh;

but, as if the momentary glance of joy died on her half-opened lips, she again closed them, and raising her eyes to heaven, seemed to say to herself—‘ You know I am no trifier.’ In this manner the cavalcade moved on slowly; at the gate she looked back once again to the window that lit her bridal chamber, when a flock of ravens that were screaming about the battlements perhaps frightened her, for she turned round quickly to her husband, as if to seek in him for consolation. Many of the attendants had followed her looks, but all seemed to be struck with the same terror, and turned their heads away in another direction. Heaven forbid that the omen should be evil.”

“ Heaven, indeed, forbid it !” sighed the Duchess ; “ but let us stay here no longer. This night, at Sion House, has become influential over my whole life, and I hasten to avoid any farther share in a destiny that seems as if it wished to side with mine in its rapid progress. My gentle Bertie,” she thought to herself, as

they past the castle gate, " I have followed you sooner than I expected. Will circumstances be always thus favourable to our wishes ?"

CHAPTER III.

UNDER any circumstances the change of government creates a peculiar and mysterious emotion in the minds of men, who are never so deeply sensible of the worth and importance of sacred majesty as when its person is snatched from them, and the senses, thrilled by the awe of the invisible, put on that religious veneration which neither fear nor hope quickens, and which, itself inscrutable, owes its existence to the inscrutable. But if a youthful king suddenly closes his eyes, whose opening life gave scope to expectation, if parties divide the land, if danger threatens a hard-earned faith, if the death of the ruler is at the same time the destruction of the prevailing doctrines, and do those, who were put down, again venture to raise their heads—then will men's ways cross each other as their opinions. There is a secret fermentation in a

thousand places at the same time, and the fire burns concealed, which an accidental breath of air will kindle into flames. Highways and inns are never fuller than in such ticklish times ; the active man must look about him for the strongest stimulus to action ; the indolent involuntarily subserves every one ; for, like the unfruitful whirlwind that carries with it the seed where it is to fall, he collects the rumours and signs of the times for the attentive observer, forwards his views, and is the breath that fans the flames.

With Ralph Partridge the concourse was so much the greater, as the vicinity to London and the Thames occasioned a constant traffic, and never since the wars of the White and Red Rose had England been in a higher state of excitement. The long reigns of Henry the Seventh and Eighth made the historical recollections of these times very distant to the many. The images too of the past, always more or less faint, are easily dimmed, if not put out, by the stronger

colours of the present, and the anxiety which oppresses the heart at an immediate danger is a very different thing from the feeling which sympathy awakes from the dust of buried ages.

“The devil take the fog!” said Ralph, coming back to the hearth from the window, which to-day was unusually empty; “it presses on the breast with a weight of lead! I wonder what will be the upshot.”

“What will be the upshot?” said his wife, rising from her seat and stretching her neck out into the road; “don’t trouble yourself about it, Ralph,” she added slowly and at intervals, like one who, occupied with other matters, only moves his lips mechanically; “See! yonder come travellers. Quick, and meet them, man, and leave your anxious looks and wrinkled brows here behind you in your parlour. By my troth, you shuffle your cards badly, and it would cost no one any great trouble to find out your game.”

“Travellers!” said Partridge, without replying to this sally; “how the deuce can you see

them? The air is too thick to distinguish any thing without."

"Notwithstanding, I do distinguish, and very clearly, too, a troop of horsemen, that are coming straight down the hill towards our house. They are armed!—without doubt, soldiers."

"Then Heaven be with us," sighed her husband; "if once they take to soldiering again, there will be no end of butchery. But I heard yesterday at Newmarket some whispers of a levy, and recruiting officers are said to be abroad; a fine hearing for drones and drunkards! To cheat innkeepers, and wash out their reckonings with their blood will be all fair play."

"What is the use of this?" cried Dame Partridge impatiently; "they are coming, and you had best let them in before they break the door open with the butt-end of their muskets."

Ralph hastened to the door, cap in hand, just

as the leader of the little party had dismounted from his horse.

"Take care," said the soldier, in a tone of command, "that my people want for nothing; and bring me a cup of good ale."

On saying this he entered the public room, threw on the table his gloves and his hat, with its short black feathers, and nodding much more familiarly to the hostess, exclaimed, "Yes, yes, my good woman, there will be life amongst us shortly, and, I think you, my honest friends, wont be sorry for it; war shakes up every thing, the pence too from the pocket, and when once they begin to roll we all know which way they take."

"Heaven defend us! War, sir? with whom? is it with Scotland? or beyond the sea?"

"We have not to look so far for the enemy, my good woman. Remember the tanner, Ket, in Norfolk; we hung him at Norwich, but the devil is not to be strangled; he transmigrates from one papistical carcase to another, and now has

taken up his abode in a woman, who is aspiring to the Queen's throne. The Catholics have banded themselves under her pretended rights, and are up in arms against the Government and the Duke of Northumberland. But, let them, let them—I shall remember as long as I live, how the Duke, who was then only Earl of Warwick, scattered the whole mob of them in Norfolk with no more than sixteen thousand men, routed the hero Ket in his camp, at Norwich, and hung that priest of Baal on an oak."

At the last words Dame Partridge stept aside, muttering between her teeth, and moving about the dishes with great clatter, as if to accommodate the guests, while a young pedlar, who had been eating his scanty meal at the furthest end of the room, now came nearer that he might lose nothing of the soldier's story. The host asked him, with a laugh, if he had any itching for the trade of arms. "How is it, my fine fellow, would you like to change the yard for

the pike or the harquebus ? Only say so ; the gentleman here is recruiting for Lady Jane."

The poor pedlar coloured, and, with downcast looks, replied : " In the cause of Lady Jane, half the world would take up arms. I hope no danger threatens her ; but if it were as they say, then,——"

" Well, my good fellow," cried the soldier, stroking up his brown, curling mustachios with a satisfied air ; " What lurks in your emphatic *then* ? Would you have us to understand that in case of need you are ready to range yourself under Dudley's colours ? By Heavens ! I can tell you we refuse no one, for the fickle Lords, who can't forgive the Duke for being a greater man than themselves, are stirring up the provinces. Norfolk and Suffolk swarm with fanatic priests, and Mary receives the liveliest marks of submission at Framlingham, whither she was unfortunately suffered to escape from Kenning Hall. In a word, although I do not think the danger which threatens Lady Jane so very great, yet one must

not think too lightly of it either. If, therefore, it only depends upon *that* to decide your resolution, you may make up your mind at once."

Ralph looked anxiously at the soldier, as if to read in his eyes how much share the wish for a recruit might have in those ominous words. He flattered himself that the only object of them was to catch the pedlar, under which idea he winked to his neighbour, and sought to banish any farther thoughts of disquiet; while something flashed upon him from the glowing eyes of his wife that re-excited his first suspicions and the apprehension of some near calamity.

In the meantime William Herbert, the pedlar, leant undecidedly against the back of an unoccupied chair, rocking it to and fro, his eyes bent on the ground, his confusion increasing with every moment, and evidently struggling with some question. At last he ventured to open his lips, and timidly said, "Excuse me, sir, you have twice spoken of the Lady Jane, or Lady

Grey; why do you not call her Queen? She has been proclaimed as such in the streets of London, and the whole country knows that she has mounted the throne."

"Your pardon," exclaimed the hostess, "the country knows nothing of it, or as good as nothing; you surely will not call that a public proclamation,—an uncertain rumour, spread by hawkers, emissary servants of the Duke, and a few travellers?"

"The country *should* know of it," replied the soldier; "the authorities have had orders to that effect."

"Yes, *should, should,*" re-echoed Dame Partidge; "but,"—

"No *buts*; bad enough if the authorities have been slack in it! and rest assured, my good woman, it will be requited to them. All disobedience will meet with its reward; so look to yourself."

"It may be," retorted the hostess, snappishly; "I only say that, where no command is, there

no disobedience can be. And, as to the proclamation in the streets of London, people know what to think of that. A few dizzened-out fellows in the colours of Suffolk and Dudley ran before the procession, bawling with outstretched throats—‘Ye citizens of London, greet your lawful Queen, Jane Grey, the grand-daughter of Mary of England, Henry the Seventh’s sister.’ Curious shopmen, and idle maid-servants, stood before their doors, gaping at the show, and joined in the cry, while the more respectable citizens slipt out of the way and hid themselves in their houses.”

Here Ralph sily pulled his loquacious dame by the gown, and said, in a whisper only audible to herself, “Make haste and get out of the way ere it ends as it did before.” But the hostess, turning round quickly, pushed aside the warning hand, and was on the point of continuing, with undiminished vehemence, when the soldier, who had marked Ralph’s action, smoothed his rugged brows, and shrug-

ging up his shoulders, said, with good-humoured irony, "She is a woman; let her talk; the Lady Jane will not for that lose a tittle of her right to the crown of England, nor we a moment the more hesitate to venture life and limb for her. Let the woman talk."

At this the hostess became crimson with rage, and stared at the rough soldier without the power of utterance. He, who thought her overcome with shame, laughed aloud; and, planting himself before the pedlar, laid his heavy hand on the young fellow's shoulder, and said, with a scoffing glance at Dame Partridge, "This is the way with us soldiers, and in this manner we drive the enemy from the field."

"The scoff is a cheap one," stammered at length the indignant hostess; "but it is the evening crowns the day, and neither your sharp tongue nor your long sword will overthrow the stake at which I shall see you roasting."

She burst into tears, and rushed out of the room, while her astounded husband anxiously and

painfully laboured to excuse her conduct. But the soldier only repeated, with the same indifference as at first, his, "Let the woman talk! Words cost her nothing; they drop from her mouth without her knowing any thing about it." With this he put on his hat and asked for his reckoning; and, having paid it, was about to set off again, when William Herbert, coming forward hastily, faltered out with considerable effort, "When am I to appear at Newmarket to take the field with the Duke's army?"

Retiring as he was, it was evident the words had cost him more than the resolution. No sooner were they uttered than he looked down in confusion, unable to bear the searching gaze of his new commander, who, perhaps fearing that the poor fellow might give up this intention of the moment and take better counsel of his pillow, shook him warmly by the hand and said,—“Directly, my brave lad; you must come directly to Newmarket. Throw away your pack, with your stockings and handkerchiefs, your

Brabant camlets and remnants of piled velvet; old shopkeepers that were long ago eaten by the dust: away with them all, I say, or swap them with our host here for a nag, and go with me to the place of meeting."

"Your pardon," replied Herbert, timidly, "I do not know how to ride, and would prefer, therefore, serving with the infantry."

"What! not know how to ride? would be a man and not know how to ride! Why, you fool, if you are afraid of a horse, what will you be of a sword?"

"Don't think worse of me than I deserve. I was born and bred in the suburbs, served my early days in a shop, and never had an opportunity to shew my liking for an avocation, to which I now devote myself, and which I will try to honour by a punctual performance of its duties."

"The devil!" exclaimed the Captain, laughing; "whence have you got these fine words all at once? If you are so nimble with the tongue, you must needs be active with the legs; I see

there is some talent lurking in you; so come, I have a led horse that I can trust; only once get upon his back and we shall manage it."

"Let it rest with that which I am able to do," said Herbert gently, but firmly; "you must shew no distrust of my plighted word. I have promised to be at Newmarket, and I *will* be there at the same time with yourself, for I am used to go on foot, and can keep pace with a horse's walk. Rest assured, Sir, although I am no rider, I am not the less a man of my word. That one may be without the other is sufficiently proved by the accident Doctor Fagius met with on horseback not far from a village; and he truly is a perfect man."

"Doctor Fagius," cried Ralph in terror—"In the name of heaven, when when was this? He was here but a little while ago on as dull a brute as any in England; and it carried him in so jog-trot a pace, that no one could possibly think of danger."

"That I can easily believe; nor did the

learned Doctor think of any thing of the sort ; but was indeed wrapt up in far other considerations, and did not observe that the horse often stumbled, and was upon uneven ground. My way led me close behind him; it was a little hill that we were descending, and the rain had so softened the road that I could scarcely get on; fixing my stick, therefore, more firmly in the earth, I picked out my way with the utmost caution, when, on a sudden, a heavy weight fell near me; I looked up, and saw the poor Doctor lying under his horse, his leg broken, and unable either to move or stand; upon this I took him on my back, and carried him for some distance, till we met a waggon, which brought him to an inn in the village, where he lies at this time fretting inwardly."

"Where he lies at this time!" exclaimed Ralph, with lifted hands and a face of such deep concern, that the Captain was struck by it, and, shaking his head, observed, "the accident has more with it than a broken leg. But I

think you, too, master Ralph, would do well to buckle a sword to your side, stick pistols in your girdle, and leave your inn-keeping, for, one thing or the other,—either you fall into the hands of the faction, or your wife by her chattering ruins both herself and you. So God be with you! May we meet again in peace!”

“Heaven grant that we may!” faltered Ralph, and warmly shook the proffered right-hand of the soldier. But William Herbert, in the unwonted emotions of his heart, fell about the host's neck, and, as if in parting from his old friend he parted too from the past and its quiet occupation, burst into a flood of tears.

“Take care, Ralph, of my pack yonder. When we have fixed the young Queen on the throne, I shall come back, reclaim the goods of you, and trust that she will be their purchaser. Do you not think so, Ralph?”

Ralph returned the youth a melancholy nod, and with anxious forebodings watched the troop

and its leader pass along the road. He sighed as he said to himself, "Poor Doctor Fagius! what has your unseasonable haste availed you now? There you lie, and who knows how it all may end? I would not give a penny-piece for your safety."

He had not, however, much time to dwell on such thoughts, for the scene was changing every moment. Scarcely had his first guests left him, than there approached two travellers of distinction, who seemed as though they were either to meet or wait for some one. They were both young, of pleasing figure, and that confidence of manners which of itself denotes rank and a firm footing in life. For the sake of appearance only, they called for the poor refreshment which could be supplied by a village-inn, and seated themselves in the remotest corner of the room, but without exchanging much more than single words, and these Ralph caught rather by conjecture than by hearing.

In about half an hour they were joined by a

third, whom they received with evident consideration and impatience.

“My Lords,” said the new comer, without too much regard to the place they were in; “I doubt not you reckon me with yourselves, and do not attribute to my new kinship more influence over the purity and duty of my hereditary opinions, than is consistent with the esteem that a name and character like mine demand.”

The noblemen bowed, and by their silent gestures gave him to understand he had their perfect confidence. Sitting down in a chair opposite to them, he continued:

“As we are agreed, therefore, I do not hesitate to accompany you to Framlingham and swear that fealty to the Lady Mary, which has long ago been sworn to by our hearts. To give this measure the greater weight, I am followed by four thousand men, who, though levied in the behalf of Dudley, are yet in all loyalty devoted to the service of the Queen.”

"My Lord Hastings," replied one of the others, "your siding with us will be the most sensible blow to the proud Northumberland, for assuredly he reckoned on one whom he had chosen for his son-in-law. He must have concluded that the double marriages on one day had united your interests with that of the fortunate Dudley."

"The boy!" interrupted Hastings, while the glow of indignation flushed his cheeks. "But tell me, Bath and Sussex, would you be tractable enough to crouch under the feeble arms of a childish playmate? I, for my part, have no inclination to honour the kingly majesty in the foolish humours of an idle brother-in-law; good truth, the threshold, which leads from my chamber to that of the little Dudley, is not high enough to let me think of a throne. If I am to kneel before such an one, it must have a sacred claim to my subjection."

"And this claim," said the Earl of Sussex, "has been obtained by underhand means in

favour of the Lady Jane; for, if your avowed opinion of the Duke will allow me to speak it out fairly, I may tell you that he is grievously accused of the late king's death."

"At least," said the Earl of Bath, "the testament excluding Mary from the succession, which she inherited by her father's will, was painfully extorted from the dying king."

"You have said it, my Lords," replied Hastings, with an assenting inclination of the head, "and I can not gainsay it withal. Therefore,—"

"Therefore!"—exclaimed the others, rising; and, for an instant, all three lingered as if the weight of a decisive step had lamed their motion.

"Unhappy Jane!" exclaimed Hastings at last, starting out of his gloomy meditation;—"Beautiful, lovely creature; why do you waste your tenderness on one who does not know how to value you? On one who is dragging you with him into the abyss? What!"—and he turned a dark look on his companions—"will

Mary think of avenging in her the transgressions of others? Impossible! Jane's extreme youth,—her touching innocence!—No! I do not fear for her."

"How," replied Bath, "could any one endure the thought? How reconcile it with the justice of a Queen for whom we are willing to sacrifice life and limb?"

"In truth," said Sussex, still looking on the ground with thoughtful earnestness; "In truth, that is an evil omen which is so rife amongst the London populace. They talk of——"

"The ravens?" interrupted Hastings, impatiently; "Goes not the story, that a flock of these ill-omened messengers clamoured about the turrets of Sion House on the departure of Lady Jane?"

"Your pardon, my Lord; though I heard of this too, yet the evil omen, to which I alluded, was of a much more fearful character."

"Speak it then quickly; I stand on red-hot coals."

“ It is whispered that, just as Lady Grey entered the Tower, she was met by a man from an inner room, in a long red mantle, whose forbidding figure seen through the dull morning fog made such an impression on her that she turned away her face, and involuntarily made a repulsive motion with her hand; this action, of course, made the unwelcome visitant an object of closer inquiry, when it appeared— ” The Earl hesitated; and the listeners stared fixedly on him, their anxious eyes seeming to ask for that which their lips did not dare to mention.

“ It appeared,” faltered Sussex, “ that it was the hangman, just come from the execution of the fanatic of Kent, who, in the general ignorance of the King’s death, had been beheaded on his order, and privately to avoid commotion.”

“ Poor shadow of a Queen,” sighed the Earl of Bath; “ does your Tower greet you thus bloodily? But who was this fanatic? What was her name?”

“ Name her not,” cried Hastings eagerly,

but the word already trembled on the lips of Sussex,—“Jane!” Unable to conceal the violence of his inward emotions, he pressed his hands to his pale face, and, hastening to the door, exclaimed, “No more, I conjure you, by the weight of our enterprise!” The others followed him, and, in a few moments, Partridge was left alone in a corner behind the broad stand, covered with tin mugs, whence he could see and hear all without being observed.

“We are in for it,” said he, half aloud; “It is our turn now, and Heaven have mercy on us! The tables are terribly changed. Bishop Cranmer! Bishop Cranmer! They’ll teach you an ugly dance!”

“What, you are singing in another key?” said Dame Partridge, stealing in upon him. “There it is now! I always told you so! If you had not plunged head over heels into this devil’s history, it had been better with you, soul and body; but turn about, Ralph; the doors are yet

open ; a moment later and they have you in the mouse-trap."

" My good Dame, don't talk to me now ; I can't tell you what I think, for, on my soul, I don't know myself."

" But I do know, and will tell you what you think to a tittle, for I too have had my gossip with the nobleman's people without there. Civil folks they are, my good Ralph, and staunch Catholics, I assure you, quite of the old leaven. You should have heard how contemptuously they talked of the heretic foreigners, and what they said of A-Lasco, and Fagius, and Peter Martyr, how they called them hypocrites not worthy to breathe the air of England. ' Queen Mary,' said they, ' will bear none of them, within twenty miles of London. Her whole Court, and the Privy Council, and all that are in the most distant degree connected with it, will abjure their abominable heresies, and return to the true church.' I can't tell you how

light all is about my heart since I heard the good pious souls speaking out so plainly. Ralph, mine honest Ralph, now you'll feel again how well it is with a man after confession and absolution, and what another sort of spirit an absolved conscience gives one in need and peril."

"An *absolved* conscience!" said Ralph, who had hitherto looked fixedly out of the window, and now, turning upon her with a gloomy countenance, planted himself in the middle of the room; "an absolved conscience! Where will you get that, when head and heart incline not as you and others for you would fain persuade them. But no more of this; I see clearly which way the wind blows; and for the rest, the talking of these boastful treacherous Lords and their idle followers has not yet settled the business. Once before, Northumberland turned the scales when the Catholics triumphed as now, and thought to build their nest in Norwich. The same thing may happen again; in which case certain folks

have burnt their tongues confoundedly, and will find it a hard matter to cool the porridge they cooked up in so much hurry."

With this he pressed his cap more deeply over his brows, took up his knotty stick, and still muttering to himself went out into the garden to forget his cares in the bustle of the day:

"Yes, yes, go," said Dame Partridge to herself; "I shall soon bring you round again under the Catholic Queen, to our eternal honour and advantage. And now, you overweening, blasphemous Protestants! who broke the crosier and stole the tapers from the altar, now light yourselves in the night that is coming on you. But we'll make it a short one for you depend upon that; you shall have a blaze of pitch and sulphur that shall give your heretic souls a foretaste of the hell to come."

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE opinions and actions were thus contending for and against the claims of Lady Grey, she herself was living in innocent ignorance, more like a prisoner than a Queen, in the lofty and splendid chambers of the Tower. To fix her youthful fancy on more pleasant objects, she was allured to her toilet, no less by the vanity of her mother, than by the admiring love of her young husband, who gazed upon her with looks of pride, while a host of busy women adorned her beauty with the best and the richest that the fortune of the hour presented to the new sovereign. Jane put back her mother's hand entreatingly:—"To what purpose are so many brilliant stones? Whom am I to dazzle with them, when to me there is but *one*, whose love

I would possess without deceitful glitter, or cease to live."

As she said this she looked tenderly in the eyes of Dudley, while he, sitting on a stool at her feet, played with her long silk tresses, and detained them from the women who were binding them up in the fashion of the time.

"Child," said the Lady Francisca, with a suppressed sigh, "you are too ignorant of the arms with which you might overcome your enemies."

"Again talking of arms and hinting at war and enemies, of which my heart knows so little, that I would willingly give up to my cousin the crown that has been forced on me, if she would only leave my quiet happiness untouched, and I might live undisturbed at Sion House by the side of my Dudley."

"Is it possible?" cried her mother, with unrestrained indignation. "Have you so little of the dignity which belongs to noble pride? Jane,

Jane, let me not think you weak enough to publicly avow opinions at which I blush—which disarm your defenders and open the door to insolent pretentions. Shame on the grandchild of King Henry ! who does not even respect her ancestor so far as to wish to maintain his inheritance before the world !”

“ Why do you chide the Queen ?” cried Guilford, starting up proudly from his seat ; “ None can understand the language of her love but he to whom it is directed. Oh ! the word in her mouth is as comprehensive as the feeling which gave it birth. And if Jane offers the throne itself to fate, in exchange for that quiet happiness in which only her friend can sympathize, by Heavens ! it does not express a slight estimation, but the highest worth, of a good, which nothing on earth can equal, since she proposes it as the purchase-price of love.”

“ You are extremely skilful in dignifying what others propound,” said Francisca, with a sneer, “ and can explain all very conveniently, and in

a way that must be flattering to conceit. I cannot but admire, my Lord, what a learned scholar Jane has made out of you ! In truth, you have so well got by heart the phrases of heavenly and earthly existence, that you now know as little of the earth and are become as bloodless and incorporeal as befits the shadow of a Queen, the dark planet, designed to receive its light from another ; it is therefore my pale satellite cannot leave its sun even for a moment. By Heavens ! instead of singing ballads here, and managing an amorous war of words, you would have done wisely to have drawn your sword for Jane. Your youthful appearance would have done more with the people than the rough experience of your father, whom we might have better employed in looking after the treacherous Lords. I had studiously arranged that my husband should undertake the conduct of the war, while Northumberland——”

“ Dear mother, do not chide me for keeping back my father and husband,” interrupted Jane,

in a tone of supplication. "If you had heard how Arundel alarmed me for the consequences of this war; how too the wise Pembroke warned me; and how confidently they both trusted in the Duke's fortune, and from the name of Warwick alone expected the greatest influence over the troops—you would soon understand why I did not cease to weary Northumberland with my entreaties. Tell me, besides, what would it then have availed, if, when they at last returned, she, for whom they had been fighting, lay dead from grief and terror, a pale corse upon the conquered throne? My dear mother, we know not what the next morning may bring, and why risk the brief day on uncertain fortune?"

"The Earls of Arundel and Pembroke? I see, Lady, your innocence knows how to wield the royal sceptre with inconceivable wisdom. The Earls of Arundel and Pembroke! Oh, my Lord, I pray you, admire with me the good sense of your bride; or did the counsel come from you!"

By the deep insight it betrays, I could almost believe so."

The young Dudley cast at her looks of scorn and anger, but, softened by a pressure of the little hand that was lying so warmly in his own, he repressed his passion and contented himself with telling his mother-in-law that she was in no propitious humour for the happiness of her daughter, to which, at other times, she was ready to make any sacrifice.

The Lady Francisca deigned him no answer, but turned to her daughter and said, "Above all, my child, never follow the impulses of your heart; it is they that lend any colour at will to our actions, when our inclinations are to be flattered. If you had thought less of your imagined happiness, and more of your *right—your lawful hereditary right*, you had not trusted the sugared words of Arundel. He is a dastardly villain, rely on that; and wished the Duke away, only that he himself might have his

hands free. As he won you by apprehensions well calculated to surprise your heart, so he irritated Northumberland's vanity; raised his merits at the expense of the poor Suffolk, my husband; held out to him a certain victory from an army led by himself; and remarked what mischief might be done just now by a man of your father's capacity."

"Impossible! So double-tongued!—No; the world has not such villany!"

"Fool!" exclaimed Francisca; but it was with a countenance that betrayed the mastery of gentler feelings over the natural bitterness of her temper. She had just finished Jane's adornment and was throwing a last look at the beautiful head, which, almost bending under the weight of pearls and jewels, inclined a little to one side, so that her very splendour did but heighten the humility of the captivating girl, and thus spoke more strongly than words to a mother's heart. That heart, suddenly overwhelmed by the thousand recollections which

give so touching a colour to the early life of youth, involuntarily overflowed, and, before she could prevent it, the tears streamed down her daughter's back, which she grasped almost convulsively in her maternal arms.

"For heaven's sake!" faltered Jane, alarmed at this unwonted burst of feeling—"what has happened? What have I done, that——"

"Nothing, nothing;—but come, Jane—hush;—come into the balcony; there is an uproar amongst the people. They shall see you—see you in all your charms. Oh, I do not know their hearts, the fickle ones, if they resist the impression."

Jane looked inquiringly at her mother, and said, with a smile, "If things are so, what then have you to hope for me?"

"Every thing! every thing! But come, I conjure you."

"Whither?" said Suffolk, who just then entered. "Not a step, unless you would be a spectacle to the mob."

Lord Dudley, who had remained by Jane's side, asked, with an air of defiance, "Who would arrest the Queen's steps?"

"Oh, not in this tone," stammered the Duke, with a pale countenance, and a voice quivering with pain and anxiety. His knees would scarcely bear him. Uncertain what to do, he one moment sought to go, and the next to gain a fitting firmness for the occasion, while the eyes of his wife were fixed upon him with such keenness, that he was unable to endure their gaze. Dudley's unconcealed disdain, too, scared him back upon himself, so that the words died ere uttered, and the excitement of the hour pressed heavily on all. At last, Dudley exclaimed,—“I will no longer, like a school-boy, watch the rod in terror. Your news, my lord Duke, I pray you; for, beyond doubt, you hide something alarming in your breast, and consider us too weak to share its import with you. Is there any news from

the army? Has there already been a battle? Has my father been defeated?"

Suffolk looked at him awhile with staring eyes, but at last said—"Yes; he is defeated!—utterly defeated!"

"I thought so!" cried the Duchess.

"No," replied her husband, gloomily, "you did not think so. No human being thought so. And still Northumberland will scarcely credit the fame that soon enough, and loudly enough, will cry out to him the story of his downfall."

"His downfall?" said Dudley. "How am I to understand that? Who can pull down the strong pillar of the throne?"

"Ask not, but step to the window, and see how the welcome incitement to wrath and hatred has set the people in commotion. Arundel scattered the sparks abroad, and Pembroke gently blew it while he stood at a distance in apparent inactivity. In the same moment that the storm of awakened passions rolled through

the streets, the flame burst out in all its fury and it will not spare even this castle. Guilford, your father is accused of treason; he is reproached with that ambition which has exalted others and enriched both them and him. He is lost, and nothing can save us, who are dragged along by his fall, if we oppose ourselves to——”

“Stop! I will not see my father thus injured behind his back. That traitor, Arundel, those false friends, that dishonourable populace,—I will——”

“What would you do?” exclaimed the Lady Jane. “Can you flatter your youthful ardour so illusively? No, Dudley; you may not stir in safety beyond the threshold of this chamber.—It is over;—heaven be praised! the dream is over. And now, my dear parents, I put off the unhappy crown and return to my paternal mansion with a light, joyful heart, as in the days of my childhood, that seems to have scarcely

past away. Will you reject me thence, dear mother?"

The Lady Francisca stood as if palsied in all her limbs by terror. Her heart beat faintly, her eyes rolled lustreless in their sockets without an object, and she seated herself, exhausted, by the side of her daughter without answering a syllable. Guilford seemed still undecided, bit his lips, and was unable to collect his thoughts, when a dreadful tumult filled the streets and the landing-place. Suffolk rushed out of the room to the rioters, and Lord Dudley would have followed, when Jane called out,—
“ But a moment ; I have a word to say to you.”

He stood only half turned towards his bride, his eyes less fixed on her than on the door, prepared, as it seemed, to keep back the first irruption of the multitude.

“ Fear not,” said Jane ; “ my father, I am sure, has made his peace with them. The burthensome crown, which God knows I never

sought for, reconciles all strife, and even leaves a retreat open to the noble Northumberland. Nay, my dear Dudley, look not so doubtfully around you,"—and she wound her arms tenderly about his neck. "Compose yourself and follow me, and we'll leave this house of ill omen, in which it always seemed as if the walls were tumbling about my head. Why, how now, Guilford? Do you no longer love me, now that I am only the poor Jane, who gave up a faithless and divided kingdom to enjoy, undisturbed, the fairer empire in your heart?"

"My sweet Jane!" cried Dudley, irresistibly carried away by her gentle grace; "do I no longer love you? The grave would be a throne to me, if I divided it with you."

"The grave!" re-echoed Jane, as if in horror at the idea. Dudley held her fast in his arms; she gazed earnestly before her on the ground, and for the first time, perhaps, felt the future to be a thing of doubt; great, therefore, was her terror, when her mother, suddenly starting up,

caught her by the hand, which she pressed vehemently, and exclaimed, softly and rapidly,—
“They come! Gracious Heavens, they come, my child!”

Every one looked eagerly in the direction, announced by her alarmed and uncertain look. It was, however, no one but Suffolk's secretary, who entered from an adjoining gallery, having been sent, as he said, bowing to Lady Jane, to announce to her, with all respect, that the Council, satisfied with her abdication, permitted her to retire home unmolested.

Lord Guilford gnashed his teeth and stamped with his feet, while the Duchess burst out into a loud laugh, exclaiming, “Has, indeed, the courage of the sagacious Suffolk effected so much? Pray, my friend, be good enough to tell me the course of the business, for it must have been very knotty and given your master infinite trouble. Tell me, sir, tell me; I love to hear
• how great men are made by great occasions.”

“Spare us, dear mother,” said Jane; “spare

us the sufferings of my poor father, which he has yet to endure in recollection."

"Nor should I know," added the astonished servant, "what part of the business needs explanation. The people's impetuosity, their clamours against Northumberland——"

"Compelled your master to cry with them as they cried, and open the doors of the Tower," interrupted Francisca, sarcastically. "You were right, honest friend, you were right; there's nothing in all this that needs an explanation; it is clear as day-light, whoever can get his neck out of the noose, does so. And well, Dudley," laying her hand familiarly on the shoulder of her son-in-law, "how is it with you? Are not you too thinking of your safety? Go, fling yourself at Arundel's feet, and acknowledge your guilt in having been persuaded to forget your duty by the ambition of your father and the caresses of a girl. Repent your error, revile the abandoned one, do homage to the new Queen,

secure your retreat, and let that fall about you which you are no longer able to support."

"I could almost call my mother's mirth cruel," said Jane, gaily, "if I were not certain that she knew the full extent of my happiness, and mocked me only to exalt its value."

But Jane's cheerful looks and gentle words, the children of an innocent heart, were unable either to smooth the rugged brow of her husband, or to restrain her mother's wrath within any decent bounds, and much harsh and inconsiderate language was exchanged, which neither altered the state of things nor men's opinions. Lady Jane alone, with the dignified equanimity of noble minds, maintained her sweet gentleness and the tenderest consideration for those who were involved in her fate, and who suffered much more than herself: she unceasingly pitied her too kind mother, as she called the Marchioness, who, justified in far other hopes, had found herself so cruelly deceived. But, above all, Dudley's

anxiety for his father and elder brothers went to her heart; from the abundance of her fancy she placed herself in various situations, and imagined a concurrence of circumstances which might loose the knots, so inconsiderately tied, and reconcile the imbittered factions. Unskilled in the labyrinth of political and social entanglements, guileless as a child, and confiding, as youth's beautiful affection always is, nothing troubled in her fancy the image of the bold and once so revered Northumberland. She endeavoured to impart her own conviction to his son, but the attempt only half succeeded. "Come," she said, "let us fly a place which nourishes such gloomy thoughts, and I will lead you back to my chamber in my maternal mansion. There I shall again be the little Jane, whom you loved for years, and with whom you trifled away the festive evenings. How many broken play-things did we fling aside, dear Guilford! imagine that we have only been doing the same thing with the crown and sceptre, and all the other toys

belonging to the ten days which we have been dreaming away here in the Tower." And with these words she took the jewels from her hair, and stood before the angry spirits with such angel innocence, so captivating in the bloom of unadorned beauty, that, for a moment, their hearts beat more calmly, and, at length, they so far yielded to her entreaties as to leave the Tower.

The Duke of Suffolk succeeded in managing for his family a secure retreat to their own home. The little train stole quietly through the by-ways and remote parts of the city; nothing announced the daring pride of Dudley, who but a few days before had given a Queen to England and to the world the spectacle of the wildest arrogance.

CHAPTER V.

FOUR times the seasons had changed, and it was again autumn. The earth was grey and barren; the sky darkly overcast with lowering clouds; and the air raw and heavy. At such a period there is for the most part a cessation of external intercourse, and life assumes a dark and mysterious colouring, which fills the soul with melancholy, in proportion as the body becomes inactive. In the country the meeting of sportsmen and other gossips, both at hearth and table, puts on a more earnest and inward form whether it be in the woods and castles of the nobility, or the cot and ale-house of the people. The present serves only as a bridge to the past, and even from this the imagination not unfrequently wanders into the realm of the mysterious and superstitious. The present too with England was, at this time, so full of awe and gloom,

that all were glad to close their eyes upon it, and willingly forgot how soon, and fearfully, it might call upon them. Few travellers, therefore, were abroad, but the families were so much the more surely to be met in their homes, that were agreeably enlivened by the charms of increasing cultivation.

In Castle Barbican the happy Richard Bertie was fettered to the side of his lovely wife by occupations that less concerned the interest of his sick country than the advancement of the Lutheran doctrines and the inward reformation. They sate together by the wide chimney in one of those ancient, high-arched chambers, which usually had their cold walls of stone hung with arras. The arm-chairs of walnut wood, covered with dark velvet, stood opposite to each other; a small table was between them, and on it a silver lamp, which burnt from many openings at the same time, at Richard's feet lay a great dog, with which he played occasionally; while Lady Catherine, with a gentle voice, read

Cranmer's Two-and-forty Articles, the proofs of that luminous thinker, and thereby sought to gain the assurance to her belief, which her husband's decided conviction had long since ceased to need.

They were discussing several points, wherein Richard evinced his bold thinking, as well as the acuteness with which he penetrated the strange web of contradictions, that even the leaders of the Protestants were not exempt from, when a man on horseback was announced, who waited at the outer gate, and earnestly begged an asylum for the night.

"The door of Barbican," said the lady,—
"shall never be closed against a guest, however dangerous it may be to give admission to one entirely unknown."

"Who can tell whether he is so?" observed Richard.

"He is nameless at least," replied Catherine;
"and that, to my thinking, is more doubtful

than if we had to expect a strange face and no intentional concealment."

But this doubt did not continue long, for in their guest really appeared a stranger, with features that were handsome, though sharp and strongly marked. He wore his dark curling hair parted from the forehead, which was narrow, yet seemed to press on his piercing hazel eyes, and about his mouth there was an expression of benevolence that visibly struggled with reserve and a slight trait of subtlety. His figure was tall but slender, with a moderate stoop, like one who had been much and intently occupied with books, while his air and carriage generally, in spite of their being disciplined into easy indifference, betrayed one whose highest destination was the priestly rank. He greeted his hosts in a polite, unrestrained manner, pleading, in excuse for his intrusion, the haste of his journey, and the exhaustion of his horse, which he had but lately

bought, and had perhaps too much trusted in. With all this, his bearing was too open and unaffected, to justify any distrust. There was, however, something striking in the quick motion of his eyes, that glanced through the room at the first word, and rested with apparent sympathy on Cranmer's work, which had been hastily pushed aside, as well as on the quiet chimney corner and its two happy occupants. Lady Catherine observed besides, and not without a feeling of disquiet, the foreign accent and broken dialect of the stranger. The report of her conversion might easily have persuaded one of the many fugitives, who distrusted the Catholic Queen, to seek a refuge at Barbican, and thus render the relations of its mistress with the new court still more critical.

In the then danger of the Suffolks, it was her object so to conduct herself, that no oversight on her part might afford a pretext against that unfortunate family; her manner, therefore, was not without awkwardness; she forbore to ask

the stranger the purpose of his journey, and avoided all inquiry as to where he lived, or which way he intended to go, passing over all such topics, with visible haste, and giving her husband a sign to drop the conversation whenever it took that course. But as fate will not readily be prescribed the way it is to go, and still less to give up a road when once adopted, so here, too, it persisted in bringing upon the carpet what it had once resolved on. London chanced to be mentioned; the capital always exercises a secret influence over the inhabitants of the provinces, and as, at that time, only uncertain and scanty rumours were abroad, curiosity put all on the stretch whenever travellers came that way, or they could get the latest news from London through any other channel. However cold and indifferent, therefore, the lady and her husband might seem to be at the mention of the metropolis, it did not escape the stranger that their looks betrayed more sympathy than their words.

“Is it long,” he said, with a certain emphasis, that drove back Catherine’s blood upon her heart,—“is it long since your Grace has heard any thing of those events which for many weeks have filled the inhabitants of London with fear and trembling?”

“Obscure reports only,” replied Richard, indifferently; “such as the people spread abroad one day and contradict the next.”

“Natural enough, in times like the present, when ways are found to fetter the most active tongues.”

“How mean you that?” asked the Duchess, anxiously.

“I mean that those must indeed be silent, who are made dumb.”

There was something so fearful in the words, that all feeling was paralyzed by them, and for several moments a weight of lead was at their hearts. Richard was the first to master this anxious terror, and with more roughness than was otherwise usual with him, turned to his

guest, and said—"If your words have any particular reference to those friends already mentioned, speak out plainly, instead of torturing me with suspicion."

The stranger cast a doubtful look at the Duchess, who was in vain trying to conceal the feverish convulsions of her mind. Her cheeks were alternately pale and red, and tears involuntarily flowed from her eyes, but still she motioned to the stranger to speak out all he knew, without regard to herself.

"You wish it," he exclaimed—"Well, candidly speaking, it is best so; for since I am sent to you——"

"Sent? To us?" interrupted Catherine;—"From whom, my good Sir?"

The stranger evidently endeavoured, by a prudent recollection, to moderate the hurry of his feelings, and keep more in his own power the impression of his story, as he replied, "I could mention many names, for this fate embraces many in its windings; but I will only

more particularly remember the errand of the Lady Grey."

"My sweet Jane!" cried the Lady of Barbican, with as deep emotion as if she really saw before her the beautiful and lovely grandchild of her deceased husband. "Oh, Heavens! Has any thing befallen her? And does she need my help?"

"Both! Both! but I find your Grace in a singular ignorance of the Lady Jane's situation."

He paused awhile as if he would first learn how much was already known here of the events in London. The silence of both his hosts convinced him that he must go far back, and he continued with a suppressed sigh: "The intended marriage of Queen Mary with Philip of Spain, has made more than one malcontent in the country. The liberty of conscience, treacherously promised at her accession, runs so much the more danger of a fatal blow, as Gardiner, Day, and the other Catholic Bishops are restored to their dignities, while Cranmer is arrested under

the pretext of having been Northumberland's accomplice."

"Is there then no hope of the noble Cranmer's liberation?" asked Catherine, but with that timidity which looks for an unsatisfactory answer. Her guest shrugged his shoulders mournfully; "So little, that the affairs, which have brought me to your Grace, will only make his business worse and hurry him on more rapidly to his catastrophe; for it would be hard, if not impossible, for those, who are guided by distrust and hatred, to judge the unprejudiced without prejudice. Besides the Queen's counsellors are anxious to engage her in violent measures against the last stay of the Protestants in this divided land, and a pretext therefore is soon found in politics for that which religion did not dare to ask. It is the same too in the case of the Lady Jane, for there needs but a single look at her open innocent brow to free her from any base suspicion, from any charge of participating in uproar and rebellion, and

yet she and her husband have, for many days past, languished in the Tower."

"Almighty Powers!" cried Catherine; "What could bring her there? Did not Mary wish all criminal inquiry against the young creature to be dropt? Did she not say that the death of the traitor Northumberland was sufficient punishment for an enterprise which she had long ago forgotten? Why then take such a treacherous revenge now, when the past is in oblivion, and the little Jane's dream of greatness has faded away?"

"Ah," replied the stranger, "we generally fall into the hands of the ambushed enemy when we least suspect it. A commotion, raised from Kent to Hyde-Park by Thomas Wyatt, and in conjunction with Lady Jane's father who drove on the same scheme with Carew in Leicester and Warwick, completed the downfall of the Suffolk. This rising, ably planned, but rashly executed, was wrecked in the very moment of its accomplishment. The heads of the rebellion

are forfeited to the axe, and revenge is grasping even beyond them without any thought of mercy.

“This it is that I am commissioned to tell you, with the request that you will leave nothing untried to save the Duke, availing yourself with the Queen of your early intimacy, as well as of your Spanish origin and the good-will arising from it; as for Jane herself, she does not dare to hope for any thing, but considers that her crime in accepting the crown deserves death.”

“Death,” cried Lady Catharine;—“The dear, gentle Jane!—Oh is there indeed any thing so dreadful to be feared for her? Do you think it is possible that the Queen can be persuaded to so inhuman a measure?”

“I am unwilling to increase your anxiety, but if you can do aught for the poor prisoner, were it only to console her in her total destitution,—do not delay it, for I fear the days of the unhappy one are numbered. Besides,”—he hesitated; a sudden, unguarded glance at Cranmer’s volume betrayed his thoughts. The Duchess

coloured, but Richard warmly exclaimed; " I guess your meaning, Sir ; you fear that yonder pages might betray too dangerous a sympathy with the forbidden doctrines. I am not inclined to blame in others whatever caution may be compatible with their conscience, but never will I myself deny—"

" Deny !" said the stranger, with suppressed vehemence and smiling ; " rest assured, I shall never deny my opinions ; at the same time he who would aid others, must not invoke the hour of peril, nor flatter his pride by inconsiderate defiance. It is John A-Lasco who speaks this to you !" —His cheeks reddened, and his eyes kindled—" It is John A-Lasco !" And he stood up before Richard in the full height of his imposing figure, as if he waited to see how this avowal might be taken. Reverence for the learned and zealous champion of the church immediately stifled Richard's rising indignation ; he seized his guest's hand with every token of

surprise and joy ; “ Noble A-Lasco ! You !— you, under the roof of Castle Barbican ? ”

“ Moderate your transports, my dear Sir ; remember that I am on the way to Germany with more than five hundred of my London flock, and that the shepherd of so numerous and scattered a fold does not want too many observers of his travel. Do not, however, be offended at my admonition ; it was well intended, and to a hot head, such as I see yours is, not altogether useless, if you wish to remain in your native land.”

“ I can scarcely recover from my astonishment,” said the Duchess :—“ Are you not the friend of Ridley, the Bishop of London ? Were you not so firmly seated there that the public voice already gave you the place of the unfortunate Cranmer, and drew hope and comfort from your known prudence ? And yet you turn your back upon England and the best of its people ! ”

“ To provide a refuge for many of the best of its people in a foreign land,” replied A-Lasco.

“ Believe me, in these days of deluge, it will soon be impossible to swim against the stream. Peter Martyr long ago left Oxford, and death has saved Fagius. He died of the consequences of a fall from his horse, breathing his last breath at Cambridge, whether he had caused himself to be removed. They say he was to have been the first to show us the road we were to follow, but Heaven has spared him that travel, and he has the best of it. As to Ridley and his friend Latimer, I can only say that they are not in a better plight than myself and the most of our class, since Gardiner has again become Bishop of Winchester, and Reginald de la Pole has returned from Rome.”

“ Are things so desperate with us ?” sighed the Duchess, with a troubled look at her husband ; “ Who is safe, if you are not, noble A-Lasco ?”

“ All have not taken on themselves such comprehensive and anxious duties as I have done ; and it is one thing with a member and another

with the head of a congregation. Besides; my words were not intended to alarm you, although they might point at caution and a prudent reserve. And now," taking Catherine's hand, "farewell! May this hand support the mourner, and her heavy brow be lightened by your maternal blessing. But I must again, in parting, admonish you to haste, on account of the Lady Jane's utter destitution, for her mother fled into the country on hearing that her friends had been apprehended."

Having said thus much, he took Bertie aside, conversed with him for a few moments in a low urgent tone, and then left the castle as suddenly as he had entered it.

The Duchess and her husband now reflected seriously on what was to be done. Her connexion with Queen Mary had been long interrupted; the persons of the court were strangers to her, and she found it difficult to make good old claims at a time when she had broken more than one bond of relationship, and had too plainly

avowed her opinions to hope for a favourable reception. In this uncertainty she went through the list of all her early friends, dwelling on one and the other, but without at last coming to any decisive conclusion.

“How poor,” she said, leaning gently on Bertie; “how poor should I be without you, dear Richard! The world is closed upon us even before we have left it. I see now he who does not keep an equal pace with it, gets out of time, and then creeps on in loneliness about the motley circles that reject him. This is not felt till the old longing for social intercourse awakes of itself, and necessity, to which we never cease to be subject, lays claim to the help of our early acquaintance.”

“Your mother was of the house of Aquilas,” replied Richard, who had been earnestly thinking through whose influence in the downfall of Suffolk, and the then uncertain state of the old English families, his wife might regain her footing.—“If I mistake not, you have a relation of

this name still living; you spoke of her not long since."

"The old Countess, Laura de Aquilas, you mean; she married the brother of my grandfather, and was first lady of honour to Catherine of Arragon. My mother was presented by her at the Queen's court. Quite right, Bertie; but she is old and crazed, and from my widowhood upwards, I remember her only as a cold insensible being. Besides, her advanced time of life, with its consequent helplessness, debars her from all intercourse with the court, and she has long lived in an old castle not far from London, where she as good as hears and sees nothing."

"Even if all be as you say, I am still for your applying in the first instance to the experienced old lady; she cannot but be an object of veneration with the Queen on her mother's account, and no doubt preserves a right of giving her counsel and opinion as circumstances may offer."

"And how to win her to my interest?"

"Through the name of your mother. That

will be sufficient, at all events, to open her castles to you, and what you are then to find must be left to time to show."

"Well; I will leave nothing untried, though the way were over thorns. Who, indeed, would now hesitate to bleed for the right?"

It was further agreed between them, that Sir Richard should not follow the Duchess to the capital; in the critical moment his presence might excite more than enough suspicion on account of their change of faith, and thus give a decidedly unfavourable bias to the Queen's feelings. Even Bertie was of this opinion, though infinitely pained at the idea of separation from his beloved Catherine, and dreading, like death, the solitude at Barbican. His more resolute wife attempted to comfort him.—"My dear friend," she said, "either the good cause is victorious, or I hasten back to bury myself with you for ever within these walls." Richard pressed her to his heart in great emotion, but nevertheless

hurried on the preparation for her journey with so much zeal, that in the next hour she was already on her way to the habitation of the Countess.

CHAPTER VI.

On the evening of the third day, the Duchess reached a dreary building, which in its surrounding loneliness and desolation, gave sufficient tokens of the withered spirit that inhabited it. No sooner had she given in her name, and added, that the daughter of Lady Willoughby of Eresby, by descent, an Aquilas, wished to wait on her kinswoman, the lady of the mansion, than two servants in complete black came out and assisted her to dismount. A great number of similar mourning-figures filled the steps and landing-place, who with torches in their hands and silent greeting conducted their visitor to the chamber of the countess. At the door stood a diminutive old man with snow-white hair and beard, that half covered his long cadaverous face, and fell down in little curls upon the upper part of his garment. The lady past like a shadow

before his dim eyes, as he greeted her with a sort of convulsive smile and a mechanical inclination of the head ; then, lifting up his trembling hand to the lock of the door, he cautiously opened it and left a free ingress to his mistress.

The Countess sat at the end of a spacious room, and fed herself with the grateful warmth of a wood-fire that glimmered redly in its embers. On one side was a screen which sheltered the withered figure, and allowed enough light to fall from two girandoles for the emaciated fingers, glittering with jewels, to manage the business of reeling silk ; a continual faint cough and the unceasing motion of the hands alone betrayed her to be a thing of life.

Opposite to her, in the chimney-corner, was a priest, who on the entrance of Catherine looked up from a thoughtful silence, and, turning again to the Countess, exclaimed pretty loudly, " she comes !"

" Who comes ?" asked the Countess.

" The Duchess," replied the priest,—a title

which remained to her, notwithstanding her second marriage.

A hoarse "*Indeed!*" burst from the drawn-in lips; the long body drew itself up, the shining fingers rested, and Donna Laura de Aquilas rose slowly from her seat; there she stood upright and stiff, while her gown spread out its folds more and more, and, dividing over an under garment, disclosed the armorial bearings of Aquilas and Laridas worked in coloured silks. Her head was covered with a high cap, running up to a peak; over that again was a velvet bonnet, with long lappets, hanging down, trimmed with fur, that gave to the whole an appearance so much the more striking as the short fallen-in face, which looked out of all this, was ever at work with a sort of gnawing action and seemed scarcely human.

The heat and gloom of the apartment, the sickly sweetness of the odours, spread through it by fumigation, and the sight of her spectral kinswoman opposite the priest, threatened at

first to overwhelm the Duchess. She went forward with tottering steps, and was endeavouring to recollect herself, when the thin voice of the Countess asked—"You are an Aquilas?—married to Count Willoughby?"

There was a pause, occasioned by Catherine's hesitation; the Countess continued,—"You served our Queen I know, before you entered into the state of wedlock. Ah! you have wept for her with me no doubt; but sit, sit; my feet are weak."—And suddenly dropping herself down into the chair, and sitting bolt upright, she added with a bitter laugh,—"How is it I now come to the honour of your visit, after having heard nothing of Lady Willoughby for so long?"

"My mother is dead," said the Duchess, faintly. "I was married to the Duke of Suffolk, probably known to your Grace by the name of Charles Brandon."

"Charles Brandon!—Charles Brandon, one of those lewd fellows who pandered to the pleasures of the libertine Henry? God be praised! I have

no memory for these coarse lumpish faces that are as like to each other, externally, as their heretic souls are like each other."

"The Duke of Suffolk," replied Catherine, coolly and firmly, "had the honour to serve his sovereign in the undisturbed enjoyment of royal favour, without ever seeing his zeal exposed to the suspicion of panderism?"

"Suffolk!—Suffolk!" repeated the Countess, labouring at recollection; after a moment's effort, she turned to the priest, and said,—“Bishop Day, I must crave your help; what was it I lately heard of the Suffolks?”

“The Pretender, Jane, is the daughter of the rebel, Suffolk, formerly Marquis of Dorset,” said the Bishop coldly.

“And the grandchild of my husband,” cried Catherine, while her face, as she said this, was darkened by a shade of calm severity, which often overcast it and gave an expression of loftiness to her naturally mild features.

“If,” she added, “the royal daughters of England are not too good to give their hands to the nobles of the kingdom, their children, I should imagine, are not too bad for the throne of a country that allows such alliances. But I would not agitate the question of how far Jane Grey deserved the name of a Pretender, were it not my business in this house to implore for her the mediation of an honoured and powerful relation; if she have erred, she has sufficiently expiated the error, in being a witness to the sufferings of those friends whom she had not strength enough to resist.”

In uttering the last words, Catherine turned immediately to the Countess, who looked up in doubt from her to the Bishop, as if asking for an explanation of what was unintelligible to her. He answered this appeal deliberately and in a loud voice.

“The Duchess wishes your Grace to intercede with the Queen for one who cannot forget

that she drew the sword against her lawful sovereign, or at least put it into the hands of her father in her cause."

"How! I am to intercede for some one with the Queen? Who says so, Day?"

"Your niece here: she imagines that kinship may easily excuse that which, otherwise, the duty of a subject would condemn."

"Kinship!" repeated Donna Laura, without remarking the quick angry looks exchanged between the others. "I am akin to none,—God be praised,—in this land of faithlessness and inconstancy. My niece Willoughby is dead, and I know not her descendants,—do not wish to know them,—will know no fresh traitors to the quiet of my unhappy sovereign. And what are the Suffolks to me?"

"No more than any other unfortunates, who might claim the generosity of a Spanish lady of the noble house of Aquilas. That race, as famed as feared for its impartial justice, and its zeal to succour the oppressed, did not in vain shoot its

tendrils across the sea. Even this rude island shall learn what—,”

“Spare your labour,” said Day, with a dark and mocking smile ; “the Countess hears not a syllable of all you are saying.”

She had, however, very well heard the name of Aquilas, and observed, not without sympathy, the flattering tone in which it had been uttered. Her looks, in consequence, turned more graciously on the Duchess.

“Yes,” she said, “the Spaniards are a generous people, but they are not understood in England:—I hate this England ; it has cost our poor Catherine of Arragon many bloody tears : here she lay on the cold ground embracing the knees of her debauched husband, and praying him not to reject his wife. In her all Spain was dishonoured, when the brute king cast her off, and bribed his heretic devils to annul their marriage. Now, therefore, let her daughter’s hand strike whom it may ; I will not speak a single good word,—no, not for any.—Be sure

of that!—Nor should you either: can you be a good catholic and pray for heretics?"

It is doubtful what answer she might have been tempted to by the Bishop's defying glances, had not, at the very moment, an unusual noise in the court-yard excited the attention even of the dull Countess, who, with her eyes wide open and full of expectation, seemed to ask the meaning of the tumult.

"It is beyond doubt the Queen," said Day, bending over to Donna Laura.

"The Queen! and to-day!"

"She purposed passing a night here in her way to Kenning Hall, whither she intended to go after signing the death-warrant of the rebels. Although as a Queen and a christian, she may be resolved, yet the heart of a woman suffers in events of this kind."

The Duchess shuddered with fear and horror at these words, and was on the point of rising and taking her leave of the impenetrable Countess, when the grey-headed servant opened the

door, announcing in a voice that trembled with joy,—“Her Majesty the Queen !”

An old wasted figure now entered with hurried steps, greeted all without observing the objects of her greeting, and immediately crossed the room to Donna Laura, who seemed to revive in her presence. The Queen, for it was the Queen, presented her hand to the Countess to kiss, and laboured out a few kind words, whereupon they both seated themselves, and Catherine had an opportunity of examining more narrowly her morose and gloomy features. Her heavy attire, rendered still more burthensome by fur and jewels, seemed to press almost painfully upon her long narrow shoulders, while the veil and other parts of her head-dress, covered the greater part of her face, and her sickly eyes threw cold uncertain looks about her.

She spoke much in Spanish with Donna Laura, and, then calling to the Bishop of Chester by name, said something to him, but in too low a tone to be understood by the Duchess.

It was evident, however, that she was the object of the whisper, for after the Queen had again turned to the Countess and put several questions to her in her native tongue, she made a slight motion of the hand, which Catherine immediately understood, and hastened to kiss her garments.

“I did not know you at first,” said Mary with a gracious inclination; “it is besides long since I have seen you: but they tell me you have renounced the traitorous Suffolks, even to the abandonment of their name, and married a young nobleman, Sir Richard Bertie, I think. I am glad, moreover, to meet you in a house like this; it is a favourable pledge of your intentions.”

Catherine was on the point of answering with all that frankness, which was swelling every moment more strongly in her bosom, when the Queen suddenly broke off, and turned to Day;—“The Suffolks are condemned; to-morrow Dudley and the pretender, Jane, will be exe-

cuted; and soon after, the Duke and the traitor, Wyatt."

Catherine heard no more; she dropt down senseless, and at the time it was the best thing that could have happened, for it freed her from the burthen of the Queen's presence. On recovering, she found herself alone in another room, the open windows of which allowed the fresh air to stream in upon her.

"Away! away from here!" she cried after the first moments of stupefaction.—"Jane! my sweet Jane! But I will once more,—only once more—look on those gentle eyes ere they are closed for ever!"

She hurried to the door with the purpose of setting off instantly for London, but was stopt on the threshold by a man, whose wild and death-like features seemed at first unknown to her. A sort of spasmodic laugh convulsed his features as he exclaimed: "You know me not?"

"My God! Hastings!"

"The name is a horror to you ! In truth I cannot myself hear it without shuddering. But forget the unfortunate one, who is weary of name and life, and rather say, did you speak to the Queen ? Did she remain unmoved ? You are silent ; by all the saints ! I conjure you, tell me, is it irrevocably fixed that,—"

"Jane dies," sobbed the Duchess in a tone that was scarcely audible ;—"Yes, Hastings ; she dies, and I go to keep her company in her last travel."

Hastings laughed wildly—"Give me your hand then : we'll once again dance the nuptial dance together. I go with you, Catherine. There was a time when we were parties to a glorious festival, and how should either of us stay behind now ?"

"You dream, Hastings ; you are in the service of the Queen."

"What Queen ?"

"Unhappy man ! On such a journey I dare not take you with me ;"—And she gently put

aside his proffered hand. "Bethink yourself; you have sworn fealty to Mary."

Hastings stared wildly at her without replying, and for several minutes there was a silence which neither seemed inclined to break. At length with forced composure, he said,—“ You are quite right; I must go with the Queen to Kenning Hall. I had forgotten it! but in this life things are apt to be forgotten. Even the wise Dorset forgot that he had betrothed Jane to me long before the insolent Warwick asked her for his son,—And I must marry that Warwick's daughter and see another—”

He bit his teeth together, while the large tears rolled down his cheeks. Catherine could not refrain from sympathizing with him, but he avoided her looks, and for a moment rubbed his forehead in doubt.

“ Be kind enough if my sister-in-law really leaves this world—” again he faltered, his lips quivered, but he compressed them closely, and with a strong effort continued;—“ Her

brother perhaps—it may be—Lady Jane—” But the flood of suppressed feeling would no longer be controlled : he flung himself at Catherine’s feet, which he embraced with convulsive passion; unable to say any thing but—“ I loved her!—So inexpressibly loved her !”

He was gone, and Catherine was again alone sorrowfully gazing after the impetuous being who had not a little increased her mental agitation. Oppressed by the most painful feelings, she now left this house which she regretted having ever entered. When she looked back, it seemed to her as if she had escaped from the abode of unearthly beings, who, inexorable as fate, had for ages exercised their destructive influence over mortality, weaving the threads of necessity to enmesh whoever came near their dark kingdom.

It was with augmented anxiety that she reached London; when she immediately flew to the Tower. Lady Jane was sleeping; her head lay upon a black cushion, over which the auburn

hair flowed down in loose ringlets, while her pale face rested on her breast like a white rose in the night of tempests. Her hands, fair as wax, were folded over those of Dudley, who knelt at her feet and watched every motion of her bosom.

The noise made by the Duchess in entering awoke the sleeper ; she immediately got up and saluted her dear kinswoman, but neither of them said a word. The first moments of their interview were past in speechless emotion, and, when Jane did speak, it was only to announce their separation.

“ Forgive me, my dear friend, if I now part from you ; a short time only remains to me and Guilford, and I have yet much to say to him.”

She grasped Catherine's hand with a beseeching look, when at that moment the approaching sound of the sheriff's steps froze the blood in her veins.—“ My God ! already !” she murmured ; but not another syllable escaped her lips. The sheriff announced to the young nobleman, that

he was to precede his wife in execution. Guilford cast an unutterable look at Jane, who smiled and gave him a sign that she should soon follow, upon which he seemed to collect all his resolution, and with a stifled cry of agony left the prison.

Jane sat silently upon the cushion and played with her tresses that flowed in disorder about her neck, but, as if recollecting herself, she said to the Duchess—"Braid up my hair, for my neck must be free, and we have no more time to lose."

Catherine essayed the task with trembling fingers, which Jane tenderly kissed, at the same time presenting her with a ring, a birth-day gift from her grandfather, and then remained lost in thought, her hands folded, and her eyes fixed constantly upon the ground. On a sudden she started up to the door, exclaiming, "It is time!" Her attendants were already there; she signed back the Duchess, who would have followed, and bade her farewell aloud, but added in a

whisper, "Save yourself, for here you will not be safe much longer."

She was now led out and seemed to float away like an angel before the multitude, which gaped after her in astonishment. A young shop-keeper, who had bought the black baize that covered the scaffold, was taken home for dead at her sight. None could bear the moving tones of her voice when she addressed the people, in the innocent confession of childish weakness allowing her own error and the justice of her punishment, and calling on the citizens of London to be faithful to their Queen. A thousand tears were shed, but no arm stirred to save her.

The Duchess had long since left the town, and intended returning to Castle Barbican without delay, when the following lines from an unknown hand completely changed her plans :

"You are accused of heretical opinions, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, leads the accusation. If you value your liberty, quit England without delay."

CHAPTER VII.

A SHARP east wind had scattered the clouds which were driving to and fro, when the approach of day again collected them, and the vapours descended in stiff ice-drops upon the trees. On a sudden the wood of Barbican sparkled in the purple glow of morning, as if the thousand shields of a mighty troop were glittering amongst the foliage.

Merrily pranced Richard over the frozen earth, humming an old English ballad, and less intent on rousing the game, than on enjoying the wholesome freshness of the day-break with a soul of hope and a body that glowed with life and energy. A mysterious something pervaded the wood in its death-like stillness, that at times whistled harshly through the crisp branches as they trembled in the breeze and sunlight. He raised his large blue eye in thought to heaven,

while his heart was affected by the consciousness of a more intimate alliance with the wondrous home.—“Still,” said he to himself,—“still, thou grey land of mists, the shadows of thy ancient bards are flitting along the edge of the morning clouds! Still too the elf-kings sport on the wet meadows, and the dreaming wanderer stands and gazes longingly on the traces left by the gliding footsteps of the goblins. Oh, there cannot be elsewhere such bewitching mysteries, such wondrous visions, such delightful bodings!”

His soul to-day was so exalted and full of hope! the long separation from his beloved Catherine must soon now come to an end,—and Oh! after so many anxious melancholy days to rest again in her arms!—His heart beat quicker, the blood ran more merrily in his veins, and, plunging the spurs into his horse’s flanks, he flew with the speed of lightning to the entrance of the forest.

Man seldom knows what he is pursuing. Richard ascended a height that overlooked the

whole vicinity, but now a whitish mist spread over the waters, which at first rolled like smoke on the borders of the horizon, and then, by degrees steaming up denser and denser from the earth, concealed every object. He looked out into the thick fog; mere outlines only were to be distinguished, and he was on the point of turning about again, when he perceived a single rider coming towards the hill. Observing the figure more attentively, he thought he recognised Catherine's horse and trembled with involuntary pleasure; but then to find her here on a solitary journey without even one attendant, her, who never remitted a jot of ought belonging to her sex or rank! The idea immediately defeated his joy and made him equally doubtful and apprehensive. The more too he laboured to distinguish things, the more his eyes were confounded by the uncertain light; he was even ready to go mad at the continual waving and flickering of the approaching figure, till at last a sharp turn in the road gave him

plainly to see his lady's cream-coloured favourite.

This, however, was far from being a cause of joy to the alarmed Richard, for the horseman proved to be Gilles Boisy, the Duchess's French gentleman, and his appearance made it too plain that something extraordinary kept back his mistress, as he could be here only on a particular commission.

"Do not be alarmed, Sir," cried the quick Frenchman to his pale agitated master; "her Grace writes to you, with her own hand, of her proceeding."

He had already drawn forth the letter, and, while he spoke, held it out to the impatient Bertie, who, crying "Give it me; give it me,"—broke the seal, and read it with wonder, that increased with every line.

"To the grief, dear Richard, of being detained from you, is added the disquiet for what I know you will feel, when Gilles appears before you so unexpectedly and presents this letter. How

little did either of us expect so melancholy a result to a journey, suggested by your generous tenderness. My poor friend! I only came to witness the worst; but let Gilles tell you the course of the business, for it has left too painful impressions on my memory for me to dwell on it. Jane,—my sweet tender Jane!—The child of misery and fruitless repentance. — Oh! Richard! let me be silent on the story of her death—enough, that the lovely head fell under the bloody stroke of the executioner. Her father is soon to follow her, for the rash Wyatt has plunged him as well as many others into ruin; his declarations have involved even the lady Elizabeth in that transaction, and she has been dragged to the Tower without a hearing. The Catholic bishops urge the dark disposition of the Queen into an appetite for blood, and the future grows more and more gloomy for the professors of the reformed religion. Hitherto the spirit of persecution has not ventured on any open measures; revenge, as yet, only brews its draught

in secret chambers, and instils its poison into the current of life through unseen conductors. But this poison eats all about it like a canker for which there is no other remedy than death. Most of the Protestant leaders, of any influence, have been thrown into prison under the trite pretext of having had a part in the conspiracy, and a similar fate threatens their followers. Against such an enemy, dear Bertie, neither valour nor foresight avail: violence makes him bolder; and craft, inventiveness; tempers like yours too, run their heads into the snare instead of shunning it. Suspicion is already afloat against us, and the next moment may be a decisive one.

“The Queen has already succeeded in forming a new House of Commons; the venal hearts have now henceforth ceased to beat but as they are directed, and all tune themselves to the given pitch. I say nothing of the Lords; sentiment is rare in proportion as the change of time has wrought a change in the nature and dispositions of men; I do not know the world in

London any longer; even my relations have become strangers to me in all except their names.

“ Oh, Richard, I go about and about the real objects of this letter, shrinking and trying to shun the inevitable as if there could be any outlet. But there is none; none, my friend; let that be, therefore, which must be.—Richard! you must leave the country without delay; to avoid exciting dangerous suspicions I sought the Queen’s permission for you to call in a part of my maternal inheritance in Spain, and your journey to that land is a letter of recommendation to her heart, which beats for Philip with all the warmth of youth. The colour, that her fancy lends to things whenever this is the subject of discourse, washes out, for the moment, all the yellow tints of suspicion. When I mentioned Madrid and the houses of Aquila and Larida, she looked at me tenderly, and lisped out with an air as if the warm breezes of the south were blowing on her, ‘ It is with pleasure that I know the sons of England within the walls of

Madrid, for the old bands of alliance with this land cannot be drawn too close.'—I pressed her hand to my lips and hastened to avail myself of a disposition, which a word from the Bishop of Winchester might change, but she continued with a quick glance at my altered figure,—
'You of course remain with us? you would not give any other country to your son than England?'—I bowed in silence, and she added, with a visible darkening of her face, 'it is impossible that you could think of crossing the sea in your present state.' I would not let her go on any farther in her suppositions, but, as soon as she paused, took up the word.—'Heaven forbid! on the contrary, I have such a dread of the hard weather, that in opposition to my old custom I wish not to pass this winter at Castle Barbican and would stay in London with your Majesty's permission.'—Dear Richard, do not wrinkle your clear brow at this part of my story, nor look distrustfully; let no unnecessary cares weigh upon your heart. Be assured my

plan of not quitting the field till I know you are in safety,—that is, on the Flemish borders,—is well calculated to mislead our enemies; they will never fancy that I could dare to face them, if I had any thing to conceal,—and at the Queen's court too, surrounded with priests who would make me answerable for every look. The way, in which Mary received my intention of remaining in the capital, proved to me more than all the rest that I could not have devised a better scheme for our safety. Delay not, therefore, my beloved friend, to shorten the time of trial for us both; you will find every thing in train for your journey, and the requisite sums of money are lying for you at Greenwich; the moment you are safely across the sea let me know the place you stay at. Gilles goes with you, as he is familiar with all the ways and means, and through him it will be easy for you to send me certain news; at the first word I follow you: have no fears on my account, for I shall be accompanied by Sarah and two well-tried adherents in the service of

Willoughby, nor shall I be at a loss for reasons to excuse my return to Barbican, when I see the people here occupied with more important matters, or myself forgotten, which will soon be the case if I continue quiet and indifferent.

“ Dear Richard,—but no, not another word. I press your hand to my heart, and could crush that heart for rebelling against my better will and thinking of ought but your liberty and your soul’s salvation. Quick, Bertie, quick to save your faith, and on my life I follow you as soon as yourself shall deem it fitting. Oh, do not be angry! Do not be self-willed and chide your Catherine; if you only knew,—but at present you must think of nothing but your escape. Go, my dear friend; inquire not, consider not; neither dally with fate, nor defy it. Oh, Heavens! how strange is it with human wishes! I would fain carry you in my arms to the boat and row you down the Thames to the nearest port, and yet these very arms are eagerly stretched after you and wind themselves about you, to

stay your departure. God be with you, Bertie ; I am strong in purpose only ; my courage forsakes me when I would say farewell,—and yet farewell, thou only one—a thousand times farewell.”

Bertie turned away to hide his tears from the servant. With fixed look he gazed upon the wood, which, now stript of all its winter beauty by the melting sun-beams, lay there black and desolate, waving its stiff branches helplessly in the rising wind and replying in hollow murmurs to his sadness. He crushed the note together in his hand, and exclaimed with sudden bitterness,—“ That she should write thus ! Indeed ! as if it were a mere morning’s ride ! so easily does she settle to drive me from my native land, from the sweet habit of home, of the air which breathes here, Oh ! from life itself—and she has no heart for all this.”

He pressed his open hand against his eyes which were gradually overcast by a wet veil, the horse became impatient under him, and the

hounds had several times coursed to and from the wood, and now remained at some distance from their master, sitting in expectation with intelligent gaze, as if ready to bound away again at his first motion. Gilles, too, began to cough significantly.

“All are driving me,” said Richard—“well; in God’s name!—” and he paced slowly down the hill on the road to Barbican.

“A woman,” said he to himself with bitter irony—“A woman must always dwell with the passions on the surface of things, and can only see that side of circumstances which is offered by the present; if she were born to empire and with a spirit far beyond the common, still the immediate moment would possess her wholly; she would see nothing but what it showed to her, and would pass impatiently over all that lay more deeply, as if it were a grain of dust on her tambour frame.” He opened the letter a second time, exclaiming in anger, “That she should fancy all this of such necessity!” But his voice

faltered when he came to the words—"Delay not to shorten the time of trial for us both," and all the tenderness of his heart broke forth again;—"Dear, dear Catherine, I will not delay; I know what it costs you to decide thus boldly and firmly in my regard."

He now stopt at the entrance of the wood; in the meantime the fog had risen higher, filling up the intervals between the trees and mantling them with a cold, whitish grey, so that neither sky, nor earth, was to be seen, and every object, borne along as it were by the mist, seemed to float along in painful indistinctness.

"Do you, then, withdraw yourselves from my farewell?" said Richard, looking towards the trees. "How often with your murmurs have you whispered peace and quiet to this troubled heart! And to-day you only cast pale images of shadow on my recollection! Shall I then forget you? Shall I forget all, and even you too, poor, falling England?"

He drew the mantle more closely on his

breast, as if to hide from himself that which spoke too powerfully there; and, pressing his hat deeper on his brows, hurried through the forest, over stock and stone, to the venerable old castle that commanded the plain with its lofty turrets.

All, that Barbican's walls enclosed, bore the beloved traces of his absent Catherine, the recollections of the only happy year that had gladdened a dark, unhappy life,—her chamber, her picture, large as life, by the hand of a Dutch painter; her place by the fire; her harp, leaning against the high arms of the chair, with its velvet covering. Richard bolted the door, and flung himself down before the seat, with out-stretched arms, as if towards the lovely being who had here so often tenderly conversed with him in looks that he alone could understand, pouring calm and quiet into his soul; in fancy he called back those days, those hours, which, it was probable, would never return.

He had a hard battle to fight with his feel-

ings. Oftentimes he was on the point of setting at nought Catherine's prudent plan, her earnest entreaties, his own danger, and every thing else that urged him away, and, hastening boldly up to London, make an open avowal of his opinions, resolved rather to suffer death than turn his back as a fugitive on Barbican. But when, in the pride of such a resolution, he amused himself with the images of its probable results, a single glance at Catherine's picture would at once beat him to the earth. A voice from within told him—"She herself is in peril; it is she that you are to save."—"Well," he repeated, "well." But still he stood there, hesitating and wavering, till Gilles, who had obeyed his first orders on entering the castle, announced that all was packed up in the boat, which lay ready by the landing-place, at the end of the garden. "Time," he added, as his mistress had frequently impressed upon him, "was of the first importance."

"Good, Gilles; very good!" answered Richard,

but without being able to move from the spot. Gilles, however, returned every minute, knocking gently at the door and repeating his errand ; till his master, tired by his perseverance, at last came out and asked, in an absent manner, if all were ready. Without attending to the answer, he armed himself with a sword, dagger, and pistols, which he examined carefully ; and, beckoning to Gilles, left the castle without another syllable. Once again, when in the boat, he sent a longing look towards Barbican, and then turning his back upon it, glided gently down the river, gaily inciting the boatmen to sing one of their popular songs and joining as freely in the strain as if his heart were a stranger to sorrow.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCARCELY mistress of her tears, Catherine saw the minutes and hours flit away without knowing more of Bertie than that he had left Barbican ; but still the capricious behaviour of the Queen compelled her, for the time, to stay at court, and, by assumed indifference, deceive the wakefulness of suspicion. It seemed as if they had made it their business to try her patience no less than her faith. Every where the bishops pleased themselves with laying snares for her prudence ; that mental rack, which, with a thousand envenomed points, breaks through the veil of our secret opinions, was managed by them in such a way, that the firmest resolution might well have been shaken by it. Gardiner in particular revenged himself for his former constraints by employing artifice against those

whom he could not directly attack by the power of the laws. Her undisguised esteem for Cranmer had been known to him from early times, nor did he doubt that she was a convert to his doctrines, but he wanted proof of it, and this, more particularly, excited his gall and mingled a peculiar bitterness with his ill-humour. The expression which she had made use of on the occasion of Cranmer's arrest—"That he was a hard man,"—seemed unpardonable to the proud prelate; and in her case he endeavoured to deserve the epithet. The fierce animosity of Mary against all those who had aided in her mother's divorce afforded him the desired opportunity of humbling Catherine by unceasing insults, the wayward humour of the Queen offering frequent opportunities for malicious allusions. Whenever her seeming countenance called the Duchess to her closet, where the favoured ecclesiastics were always present, one or the other of them would generally manage to turn the conver-

sation so dexterously, that the events of the day were sure to lead to some unpleasant retrospect.

One morning she found the Queen with a paper in her hand, leaning back thoughtfully in her chair, behind which stood Gardiner and the Bishop of London, earnestly conversing with each other, as it seemed, on the topic before them. Mary appeared to have expected her.

“Aha!” she cried—“You are here! Come, my dear Duchess,” she added, beckoning to her with a courteous wave of the hand. “You were wanted to complete our joy; for no doubt, Catherine, you, as my mother’s godchild, will share with me in the triumph of seeing her honour cleared, and her beloved name re-established to the world.”

“Assuredly,” replied the Duchess, with unfeigned participation and pressing Mary’s hand to her lips,—“assuredly, your Majesty does not suppose in me more devotion and tender respect for the illustrious deceased than I really feel. It is with these sentiments that I am impatient

to learn the particulars of an event which can add to her fame with posterity."

"An event," replied the Queen, "so simple, so nearly allied to love for the injured one, that I can not comprehend your not falling upon the idea of yourself. My God! Duchess," she added, with irritation, "it is nothing less than that the divorce of the rejected Catherine of Arragon is set aside, and the legitimacy of a marriage recognised, which, sanctified as it is by the papal blessing, gives in me a lawful inheritor to the throne of England. But, indeed, certain people will be unmasked by it as traitors to the state, and Elizabeth, the morning sun of the Protestants, will be hurled back into the night of bastardy."

Her dead eye brightened up with an angry glare, and she smiled, as looking round to Gardiner, she said—"They will be amazed,—these freethinkers,—who thought to annul the marriage of a queen, as easily as their own priestly oath; but, so truly as my mother's ashes

rest here on unconsecrated soil, I will make them do penance for both."

The Bishop of London unfolded his round full face, drew his lips more widely apart than ever, and replied in a thin voice, hoarse from satisfaction—"By my soul, it will be no slight labour; I fear, England has scarcely wood enough for the purgatorial fires."

"I have already succeeded, in a great measure," exclaimed the Queen with ardour.—
"The Lower House, you know, Bonner, long ago assented to the proposal of a mission to Rome for the purpose of imploring the papal absolution, and the Lords have now come to a similar understanding; Lord Hastings goes to Italy to desire for this repentant land the papal absolution and a special consecration through the hands of an episcopal legate. Reginald de la Pole will return here in that character."

"We shall not then want assistance in our weighty business," said Gardiner with forced

satisfaction, too prudent to betray his dislike to the person of the Romish Legate.

“Just so,” exclaimed Bonner; “all will go well. In my diocese the cat will have much to mouse, for, if your Majesty is still resolved to issue the edict against apostacy, I know a dozen already who must burn, and Cranmer at their head.”

The Duchess shuddered involuntarily, but Mary was too much occupied with her own plans to observe her, and, beating against her open hand the roll which contained a list of the suspected, continued with flashing eyes,—“I think no one stands too high for the revenge of Heaven. The Infant shall find his way to London swept clean; and when he comes,”—and her voice trembled with impatience,—“when he comes, nothing unpleasant shall meet his royal sight; we will never slacken in the work of purifying the land from lepers.”

She cooled her glowing cheeks with the cold

dead hand against which her face rested, while she gradually became lost in alluring images of the future, and dreams of love played about the footsteps of persecution. With apparent indifference she went on after a pause,—“ They say Don Philip is the handsomest man of his time. He will please in England, I should think, and that he also may be pleased,——”

“ There only needs the sight of you,” interrupted the Bishop of London with awkward gallantry.

“ I would not affirm that, Bonner,” said Mary, half flattered, half disturbed, and seeking in the eyes of the others a confirmation of his words ;—“ My stepmothers,” she added, overwhelmed by the pain of those early recollections, —“ My stepmothers, when I was young, were always crying out on my ugliness, and I heard the word so often, that it is no wonder if my ear has become too familiar with it and forgotten to attend to more favourable opinions. It is true,

I can well suppose that they exaggerated for my annoyance, and my glass has since taught me that mind and inward peace can ennoble an exterior; but yet I know not how the Infant may think on such a subject. What has your Grace heard in this respect?"

The question was evidently asked with a view of confusing the silent listener to this conversation; but, the storm in Catherine's breast lent wings to her spirit. She answered readily,—
"Spain has become so strange to me—I know so little of the brilliant court at which the ladies of my house once flourished,—that I am more than ever pleased with the idea of renewing my interest there through the presence of Sir Richard. He will, no doubt, write to me soon and fully respecting the Infant, and we shall then be able to judge beforehand of his delicacy and discrimination."

The Queen did not remain indifferent at these words. Her impatience to know more of one,

whom her heated expectation had decked with all the charms of youth and grace, passed over with visible warmth to the Duchess.

“How, my good Catherine ! Has not the affectionate Bertie written to you ? Have you heard nothing from him ?”

“I could almost believe,” replied the Duchess, led on from one artifice to another, “that my husband’s letters are vainly waiting me at Castle Barbican, whither I promised in a short time to return. If I mistake not, my presence is expected there for many household reasons, and they artfully wish to attract me thither by keeping back the news so earnestly expected.”

“Oh, delay not then,” interrupted the Queen, “to yield to this attraction ; I am anxious to have a picture of the Infant in the familiar impartments of an unprejudiced eye-witness. In truth,” she continued, somewhat ashamed of her eagerness,—“in truth, it may seem that I am uncourteous enough to drive you from London for my own purposes ; but, to speak candidly, it

imports me that England should have a just idea of him who is to sit beside me on the throne. I know the austerity of the Spanish manners is a subject of terror to the people, and envy and jealousy easily throw a perverted light on the most brilliant appearance. But your Sir Richard, as you say, carries with him an unhackneyed mind into the new world which he is approaching, and his judgment will therefore be the more unbiassed. I shall rejoice in his letters; haste, therefore, my good Catherine, to procure them."

Gardiner, who had attended to all with a look of crafty intelligence, here asked, as if sympathizing with the Queen's feelings, "Is your Grace quite sure that Sir Richard is in Spain? Are you able to speak so decidedly of his proceedings, that you venture to excite her Majesty's expectations in a point too near her heart to allow of her being deceived?"

"O ho!" cried the Duchess with a forced laugh; "you are skilful, my Lord Bishop, in stirring up the jealousy of us women; but if you

shake my confidence in my husband, how can you expect me to put any trust in others ?”

“ She is right, Gardiner,” said the Queen, who saw nothing but a jest in all this ; “ She is so right, that I must at the same time take the opportunity of reproaching you again for the doubts you have so often opposed to my choice. But don’t mind him, Catherine ; he is an enemy to marriage, and aims at turning our affections aside from their object. How much he had to say against the *Spanish Philip* !”

The Bishop, finding himself so unexpectedly attacked on this side, endeavoured to hide his confusion under the flattering avowal that, “ he had, with loyal jealousy, wished England might preserve the undivided possession of its richest jewel, and that, in the spirit of all those who could pretend to such a treasure, he must still envy Philip.”

“ By my troth,” exclaimed Bonner, with a laugh of self-satisfaction, “ that I call spoken like an Englishman.”

Mary thanked both with a very gracious look, but, as if to conceal her satisfaction in flatteries of this sort, she said, "This island would fain remain inaccessible to the rest of the world and with the hoarse roar of its waters overwhelm the sweet voice of the south. But come, Catherine, I have commissions to give you for Spain ; let us leave these austere prelates, for they do not understand our language."

It seemed to the Duchess like a dream, that this fateful hour should have had so favourable a conclusion ; but it left behind, notwithstanding, a bitter recollection. "To what a game of falsehood," she said to herself, "has the crafty malice of my persecutors driven me ! No ; not another day will I wriggle through this labyrinth !. Mary herself bids me go, and if I have owed my freedom to a pretext, which my conscience only half approves, I must now, at all events, rush boldly forwards to avoid new springes."

On the very same night she left London with-

out waiting for the expected news from Sir Richard, nor at Barbican did they know any thing more of him but that he had gone, and in this she began to fancy a punishment for the fictitious letters with which she had deceived the passion of the Queen. For the first time she began to look with doubt on her undertaking; the solitude, the silence of a country habitation, the rough season, all lay oppressively on her breast. She had scarcely spirits to order the requisite preparations for her flight, and yet the growing peril urged her; it was evident that the proclamation of the new edict exposed every one to a religious inquisition, and if she wished not to fall into the hands of Gardiner, who would surely spare no pains to bring her to an answer, the painful step must be taken and the worst adventured.

“ Sarah, my good girl,” she said on the following evening, “ the hours are numbered now that we may remain in our native country. Nay, do not tremble, nor look so despairingly as if we

were already overtaken by the fate we are flying from ; you are not usually so deficient in sense, nor so ignorant of the world that a sudden novelty of situation should make you lose all self-possession. But go, find yourself some employment in the necessary preparation, for employment is the best conductor of useless anxieties."

" *Useless*, indeed !" cried Sarah, bursting into a flood of tears ; " for what boots it to try to swim against the stream, but *groundless* they certainly are not. Gracious Heavens ! I have always feared this moment, but I never thought it so near with all your warnings. To leave one's home and country !—Oh, it is like the parting of soul from body."

The Duchess courageously subdued her feelings as she replied,—“ Yes, it is indeed painful ; but what good is there in standing idle under the affliction ? You see, things cannot be altered."

" Pardon me," replied the confidante, accustomed to contradict on all occasions,—“ Grief,

too, will have its rights. Besides, let me ask, is it a prudent plan to expose yourself so short a time before your expected travail? Do you know what dangers may threaten you? And have you forgotten how hardly Heaven smote you in the death of your two sons, both snatched away in the same day?"

"You would keep me back, Sarah, and have touched me in a tender place; but though your hand be somewhat heavy, I will not for that be impatient of it. My good girl, the recollections you awaken are bitter enough to drive me from a land in which nothing has fallen to my lot but broken happiness. Tell me yourself, when have I ever enjoyed a lasting state of peace? Was not my first marriage disturbed by the constant opposition of the artful Francisca? And did not the boys smile in my lap only that I might see them taken off by that devastating fever which cost England more than a thousand lives? In truth, your arguments come over to my side of the scales and give it the preponderance. Be-

sides, Sarah, can I act otherwise? Would you have me await here imprisonment and certain death? You must little know how things are going on in the world now-a-days, if you can think of putting off flight, which, when once resolved, can be delayed no longer. Hasten, therefore, and bring me my jewel-box and the rouleaux from the little chest of ebony inlaid with pearl, a nuptial gift from the Duke; I would fain have with me that master-piece of Flemish art.—Oh, how much is there I would take with me if it were possible!”

The Duchess sighed as she spoke this, but Sarah renewed her admonitions.

“Only hear how the waters are beating on the shore; the river is so unquiet, there is certainly a storm brewing. You may see, too, the topmost branches of the trees already begin to quiver. Is this a night to trust yourself to the tide?”

“And how will it be in the morning? How can you expect better weather at this season of

the year? Go, I pray you, and send George and Baptist to me; the honest fellows, they will hardly remain behind."

"And just as little will I," answered Sarah angrily. "Surely I mean it well with your Grace, for it only needs eyes to see that this thick heavy air, with a fog which one might cut with a knife, cannot be expedient for a lady of your Grace's habits."

"As to that, my poor Sarah, much may be seen which you would do well not to see. But we are fighting here with blunt weapons, and torment and weary ourselves without any result. Look! the sand in the hour-glass must not run out twice again before we leave this place. Mark you that, child, and do what you have to do."

The Duchess went and locked herself in her chamber, and Sarah followed with moist eyes, exclaiming—"She certainly will repent it! These are the consequences of a marriage from which I never forebode much good. The Duchess of

Suffolk had never needed to leave Castle Barbican, but the wife of the Reformer, Richard Bertie, must go whichever way the new creed may whistle her."

CHAPTER IX.

"Does not the Thames seem dark as an unearthly stream?" said Sarah, creeping close to her mistress in the narrow boat—"and the water beats so hollowly against the labouring oars!"

The Duchess shook her head in silence.

"No! I cannot express all that comes into my head this strange night. When you were just stepping into the wherry, and the boatman, scarcely visible in the fog, took your hand, and the old castle had melted away in distance, it seemed,—pardon me, your Grace,—but it seemed as if we were descending into some hellish abyss."

"Poor Sarah! You torment yourself doubly. But go on with these fantastic dreamings; they may perhaps make the reality more tolerable."

The Duchess again sank into her former

silence. A weight was at her heart and closed her lips. For a time she bore patiently with the timid Sarah, who did not cease busying herself with her mistress, under the pretence of a thousand little attentions ; sometimes drawing together her cloak more closely, at others fastening her veil or bonnet, that they might not be blown off by the breeze from the water. At last, when Sarah found all was to no purpose, and not a single syllable rewarded her labours, she exclaimed—"For the love of heaven speak, if it be but one word, that I may know you live, and are, indeed, my gracious mistress."

"Silly girl," cried the Duchess, peevishly; "I would that we really did dream. But let me, for a few minutes, blend the dark uncertainty of my fate with the nightly glimmer of the waters, the shadowy outlines of the shore, and this mysterious gliding over the indistinguishable river, and allow my heart a momentary repose. I am afraid that the bright

day, which you miss so heavily, will only break too soon upon us."

Sarah obeyed this positive order with a sigh, and turned her looks and thoughts from her mistress. Closely wrapt up in her hood, she hung her head down and dropt into a momentary sleep, when she was awakened again by a confused though distant sound of the cry of hounds and the neighing and snorting of horses, and, looking up, fancied she saw the pale shadows of the wild huntsmen, whizzing along the shore. Unable to master her fear, she clung to her mistress and shrieked out, that there was Lady Jane Grey, without a head, behind a huntsman on a grey horse.

"Hush, dear Sarah," said the Duchess, gently pushing the frightened girl from her;—"hush these idle fears, and look about you. They are living men that you see, who have risen with the dawn to go a hunting."

"Yes," said one of the boatmen; "it is the Earls of Bath and Sussex; they are taking leave

of the young Hastings, at his castle yonder by the sea, before he enters on his pilgrimage to Rome. They lead a mad life of it, and will need the absolution which the slavish Hastings is to bring from the Pope."

"How can you venture such bold speech?" said the Duchess, warningly. "Do you not know the late orders of the Queen, to restrain words and thoughts under pain of death, and to be ready at any time to appear before the Bishops' court."

"Do we know it?" replied the boatman, leaning on his oars and looking carelessly on the current—"What is the Bishops' court to us watermen? We have no firm footing any where, and as easily float from the Thames to the ocean as the sea-bird to Iceland and the Orkneys. But even if we were not the masters of our freedom, and were forced to plough the land, milk cows, or drive up carts to London with beans and cabbages, we should not have played the hypocrite with the Catholic Queen, as the

Lords did, nor have given up poor Jane to the axe of the executioner. I heard lately from a poor fellow, who has wandered about ever since the death of Lady Dudley, terrible things of that same execution, and how the streets were filled with the smell of sulphur, and the town circled about with clouds of fire. The brewers from that time have not been able, through the whole city, to brew any good beer ; and monstrous births have been common. Many, who were eager to see the sight, have been struck blind ; and the wild Hastings, too, they say, has got it ; his legs are affected, and he withers like an old man. Look now, that is he yonder, galloping his horse up and down the shore, dark as the grave and pale as a ghost. You may distinguish him more plainly now in the daybreak than you did before."

The boat glided along by a row of hills ; at their declivity was a man on horseback, whose wasted figure, uncertainly lighted up by the doubtful glimmer, attracted Catherine with that

mingled feeling with which the objects of fear at once allure and pain us. "Is it then, indeed," thought she, "the brilliant Hastings? he, who on his wedding-day sate opposite the unhappy Jane, so richly attired, so blooming in youth, the hair flowing in rich ringlets down his temples and cheeks, his eyes so full of fire, his neck drawn up so proudly!"

"For Heaven's sake!" said Sarah, "don't gaze so upon that spectre; think on yourself; do you wish your child should be a horror to the world, with such an old man's face, such hollow cheeks, such a bald head, a breast so fallen in, and limbs so loosely hanging together?"

"Ah, Sarah," sighed the Duchess, "who will dare to tell what he presumes to hope or fear? The next moment may change every thing. If this nobleman, as handsome and hopeful as any of his time in England, has so briefly come to decay, what are youth and beauty but alluring tales, with which the fancy deceives the eye?"

"Pray do not,"—cried Sarah, seeing her mis-

tress look still after Hastings; "What can you see in that colourless cloak, the black feathers, and that sickly bearing? I would not for all the world meet this singular being a second time in the grey of morning."

"There they go, the wild huntsmen," said the sailor, shaking his head as the shouts passed off amongst the hills; "Their treachery to Northumberland leaves them no quiet in their beds.—Ah, he was a true soldier! The Scotch and the rebels in Norfolk found that!—But now the Lords must learn to fight with the tongue and axe if they wish to follow the colours of the Bishops; it is a bad time for soldiers, when a woman and a priest divide the throne between them. I say nothing of the outlandish husband that is to be fetched beyond sea, who, as I think, won't much relish his English diet, and will soon be driven back again by the cold fogs and a colder bed. The Queen, who is growing old, won't do for the hot Spaniard; and if others hold with me, we shall

sing him a bride-song that will make his ears ring again!"

In talk of this sort they had past many villages on the river-banks, and now determined to land at one of them, the Duchess thinking it better to ride on to a harbour in Kent; in this way she would be less likely to be recognised and might choose the road that promised most safety.

They landed worn out with fatigue and agitation, and a fisherman's hut received them. The Duchess was shown, at Sarah's request, into a room apart, to seek repose for a few hours. It is true, that the poor hovel offered no particular accommodations, but a weary eye can close itself on a mat of rushes. She stretched herself out comfortably on the coarse linen, twined her fair arms about her head, and, soon overpowered by sleep, forgot herself and the humble roof which sheltered her.

A pleasant dream, as if a child were lying in her arms and smiling on her, so vividly occupied

her, that on waking she still seemed to hear the gentle tones of the little innocent. She started up; Sarah was nodding at the foot of the bed and saw and heard nothing, and except her not a soul was in the chamber.

“A dream, then!” said the Duchess, sinking back into her former state,—“The little puppet!”—But her ear was struck again by the same sound. She listened;—“By Heaven, no! this time I did not dream!” and she rose up and cast an inquiring gaze about the room.

“What is the matter?” asked Sarah, roused by this exclamation.

“Did you not hear the voice of a child, and as near too as if it were in the same room with us.”

“It is, indeed,” replied the maiden laughing; “your Grace dreams with open eyes; no doubt you were thinking too vividly of the future, and what the fancy figures,—” Here a repetition of the same tones broke off the useless explanation. Sarah was astonished.

“ Now ?” said the Duchess.

Both were already on their feet, and began to search the chamber.

“ God in heaven !” cried Catherine ;—“ Here, in the bed-straw, at the foot of the bed, carefully bound up in silk wrappers, and a laced cap about its head, is a little creature so fair and delicate it might pass for an image of wax. Look, Sarah ! only look ; the sweet thing is not many months old.”

“ A living child, indeed ! and flung into the corner like any useless piece of furniture ! How does that agree with the valuable clothes upon it, which could only have been supplied by the affection of a mother, that never thinks it has done enough.”

“ The mother !—No ; the mother is not to be sought in this house. Heaven knows what fate it may have already met with in the cradle. Go, and call the sailor’s wife to me ; I must inquire more narrowly into the mystery of this appearance.”

Sarah, urged on by her own curiosity, hastened to comply with the wishes of her mistress, who called out after her, "Do not mention the little foundling till I have myself exposed her negligence to the woman." The girl promised to curb her tongue, and hurried out of the room.

In the meantime Catherine kissed and fondled the child in her arms, till it opened its large blue eyes upon her, while a smile played over its features.

"Dear, dear little creature!—Tell me who you are, and how you came hither?" she exclaimed.

At this moment Sarah returned, followed by the sailor's wife, a dwarfish wizzened figure with a dull stupid look. She stared at the Duchess for a moment, and then, as if recollecting herself, said, "What, has the little thing troubled you too? But, never mind, never mind; it can sleep anywhere."

The Duchess eyed the woman keenly with her wonted lofty look, rendered sterner by a feeling

of indignation, and asked,—"Is this the way you take care of what belongs to other people? for certainly the child was trusted to your charge."

The woman coloured a little, but answered with all the impudence of ignorance,—"A charge that is forced upon people does not bind them to any particular attention. There is want enough in the house without her, and our Martin went quietly look on and see a strange bird in his nest. Things don't go so easily with every one; we worry ourselves from morning till night, and then, when we have earned our morsel of bread, we are to share it forsooth with other folks' children!"

The Duchess sighed; the rough stone, which she had thus unexpectedly stumbled against, gave her pain, and yet her own nature was of the self-same elements as that which had so wounded her. She saw with terror the influence of poverty, and how it distorts human nature from its better bias, and addressed the woman mildly:

"My good woman, have you had the little creature long? Pray tell me how you came by it."

"How I came by it? Why, like a thief in the night. But you shall hear:—Yester-evening there was a violent knocking at the door; I thought it was our Martin coming home, and as he soon gets into a passion and makes me pay for it if I keep him waiting in the cold wind from the water, I called out as I lay in bed, 'Coming, my good man, coming.' But a strange voice answered without, 'Quick, quick; I am in a hurry.' I was frightened, as you may believe, and while I was blundering about and putting on any thing in my terror, I thought I heard the snorting and pawing of a horse. This made me suspect nothing good, and yet I held my hand on the lock, and the door opened, I don't well know how. Instead of Martin there was a tall man on a high horse, who stood so close to me that I thought he would carry off me and the house too. I screamed aloud, but he spoke to me in a voice that sounded right sweetly and went so

to my heart, that when he talked of a service he wished me to do him, I could not say nay to it, but answered, that if it was to be done, I might do it as well as another. In saying this I looked up at him a little, but his hat had broad flaps, and his cloak was drawn over the lower part of his face.

“ He now opened his mantle and unfolded from it a something that he held out to me as he said,—‘ I am a pilgrim, faint and sick, and my way leads me far from here. Take good heed to that which I now give you ; perhaps I may soon ask it of you again, perhaps not till some distant period. Farewell,’ he added, without allowing me time to answer, ‘ Farewell ; remember this night and me,’—and he gave the spurs to his horse as he bent his long neck in salutation. At this moment I caught a glimpse of his eyes, and it seemed to me just as if something flashed across my breast like lightning.”

“ Well, and what more ?” exclaimed the Duchess eagerly.

“What more? Why what more should there be? He had got rid of the child, and I had it on my hands. I thought I should have sunk into the earth when I undid the wrappers and saw what a fairing I had got. A fine piece of work there will be when Martin comes, said I to myself, and ran into this room with the little bawler, that began to cry out for food. However, I got some bread and milk and fed it, and, when in a few minutes it went to sleep, I searched the clothes, thinking to find something of value as a payment in advance for the trouble I was to have with the urchin; but there was nothing, just nothing at all, except this bad bit of money that Northumberland coined with the face of Jane Grey and scattered amongst the Londoners; I'd give it to any one for a brass farthing; and as to the silk rags that are to be a portion with the little bastard,—for it certainly is no better,—our Martin wont value them a jot more than this paltry piece of silver. Well, I turned the matter this way, and that way, thinking to myself what

I should say to my hot-brain on his return that he might not go quite mad, when I heard some one calling without. In my first fright I hid the bone of contention in the straw and ran out, but, as good luck would have it, there was nobody but Jenkins, who had run his boat ashore here and was bringing in you strangers. The sight of your faces made me forget the child and all thought of what I am to do with it."

"I will tell you what you are to do with it," said the Duchess; "give it me. I am willing to take it off your hands."

"Your Grace!" exclaimed Sarah indignantly, "So young an infant! and on such a journey?"

"Perhaps you are right; but, call it folly or what you will, I cannot abandon the little one. Heaven only knows our destiny, yet this deserted creature is manifestly intrusted to my care. Look, Sarah, look at this smile, these delicate features, this eye with its bright deep blue like an open violet; look, and say if you could bear the idea that such a being should

remain in these hands. No, you cannot possibly think so much of the little trouble it may give you, as to forget your own good heart for the sake of it. You, too, my good woman, what say you to my proposal?"

"A strange child on such a journey!" muttered Sarah. "Did ever any body hear the like?"

The Duchess cast a mild look at the angry confidante; but the sailor's wife still remained uncertain what to do.—"Suppose," she said, "that the stranger should sooner or later come again? How then?"

"Tell him that a lady, whose face showed undeniable tokens of a tender heart, has taken on herself a mother's office with the lovely little creature, and will from time to time give a true account of its condition."

"As to the telling him, it is not that concerns me; words are easily found, but it might so happen that he bethought himself better of the matter, and inclined to act more liberally; now, if

the child is no longer in my care, he will fancy himself freed from all farther obligation, and then what recompense shall I get for all the fright I have had?"

"I see the dullest creature knows how to take care of itself.—Well, here," flinging a few pieces of gold to her,—“here is enough to recompense you for your half day; take them: and do you, Sarah, make no more objections; I am resolved that it shall be so; you know that is my last word on such occasions.”

The experienced Abigail changed her tone immediately, and, to make amends for her first fault, busied herself very eagerly with the child, asking how it was to be called, and kissing its little mouth as warmly as if she were to be inspired thence with the name. In the meantime Catherine was looking for the mark upon the clothes; it had been picked out, but below it two rose-sprigs were twined together. On a sudden Sarah cried out, “Ah, my little rosy-mouth! you must be called Rosamond!”

“ Right, Sarah ; our love shall so baptize her a second time. My Rose ! My sweet Rose ! smile on and thank me thus for having delivered you from this miserable hovel.”

While they thus added to their affection for the child by these relations that grew more and more vivid, the sailor's wife looked on the business as already settled, and, glad to have made so good a bargain, ran out with the money in her hand to talk over the matter with Jenkins and his people. The boatman, who was a determined, plain-spoken character, rated her for having cast away her trust and exposing herself to a future responsibility.

“ You may chance to pay for it when the stranger asks you for his child, and you can't tell whether it is alive or dead. What will you say if he comes again ? And he will come again, be sure of that,” he added, in a decisive tone.

“ Ay, marry, master Jenkins, do you say so ? If you know more of the business, you must be

able to tell me who the man on horseback was."

"Stuff!" said the boatman, laughing; "What is your imp, your fairy's child to me? I have nothing to do with it, nor have I said any thing about it, but, nevertheless, true is true; you ought not to give it away since it was intrusted to you."

"I lay my life, Jenkins, you have had a finger in the pye. A fairy child, say you? Yes, to be sure! the creature is a mermaid; you fished it out of the water, and upon that, the nobleman, who is in love with its mother, has——"

"I wish you'd leave your chattering, and let the thing be. Done is done,—or, perhaps, after all, it is for the best," he added, thoughtfully. "Who knows how it would have fared here with the poor foundling in the end?"

With these words he turned away from the troublesome gossip, who looked after him, shaking her head and muttering to herself—"I

hold to it still, Jenkins knows more about the child than he chooses to say."

In the meantime the object of all these words and doubts slept quietly in Catherine's arms, indifferent as to what was going on ; and just as indifferent was she, when her foster-mother the next day resumed her journey, sometimes in a chair, and sometimes on horseback. Sarah, indeed, sighed in secret over the painful increase of her occupations, but, whenever she chose it, she knew perfectly well how to hide such feelings from her mistress.

CHAPTER X.

THE party got to Rochester without any accident; it seemed as if the prudence of the Duchess, in avoiding the road which her husband had taken, was to be rewarded with success, for not a single difficulty had stopt them on their way, and the long-expected letters from Sir Richard were here given to her by the friend who managed their correspondence; having been forewarned of her projects, he had kept back the dangerous writings till he could deliver them with safety.

Bertie had safely put to sea in a Belgian vessel, and, arriving at Dunkirk without any farther adventure, conjured the Duchess to follow him immediately, as it was on her account only that he lived and struggled with the pains of exile. His letters breathed that tone of melancholy passion which had at first so irre-

sistibly attracted her love, and which now gave new wings to her desires. In spite of all objections she hurried on her departure for the lewish coast, whence she intended to send for Sir Richard, that they might together seek for some final place of security. It was in vain that her friend pointed out the dangers of the winter-storms, which are so frequent in the North-West Seas and occasion so many shipwrecks; she listened to all such warnings with great indifference, either not giving them the full credit they deserved, or only seeing a trick in them to detain her in England. There had, however, been for many days past a heavy rain, accompanied by changeable winds that heightened the danger of an attempt for which even courage might be no match; but although all this was set before her in every possible point of view, she still persisted in her resolution. To Sarah, who was constantly pressing her on the subject, she said, "Pray, do not torment me any longer. What should I gain by waiting here for the

casualties of the weather? Don't you think, yourself, that the unnatural uproar of the land is much more dangerous than the tempests of the ocean? Have you not heard how busy they are in London with the purgatorial fires, as Benner calls them? And do you imagine they will not stretch out their hands after all of us? I see mankind only recognise the immediate danger for real, but experience has taught me to escape the concealed dagger by meeting peril ere it reaches me."

"I know that your Grace cares less for any thing than the sorrow of Sir Richard, which just now has too much influence for you to listen to objections, but you should consider,—"

"No considerations, Sarah; if I once puzzle myself with them, there is an end to active resolution. Confess, too, you eternal carper, that hitherto all has turned out well, every token has been favourable, and the unexpected good fortune of hearing news from Sir Richard in the very moment of setting off ought to invigorate

my courage and give me fresh spirits to follow the path that I have entered upon."

"Your Grace has reasons for every thing, which are far beyond mine in warmth and vivacity; but,—"

"But not in substance?" interrupted the Duchess, laughing; "in your ill-humour, Sarah, you give me all my clothes wrong, and that's a very bad omen."

"Pray do not mock me; you know not what I suffer on your account. It breaks my heart when I think on what may be the consequences of a passing annoyance only."

"My good girl, I really grieve for you; but, in truth, you have too faint a heart."

"Indeed, my father was no Willoughby, nor my mother a Spanish lady; but at Dover, where I was bred and born, one learns to know a sea-storm."

"A sea-storm, silly girl! What should make you fancy we are threatened with a sea-storm just now? I will lay you any wager that I shall

laugh at your foolish fears ere the day is over."

"You will laugh, I dare say, for when do you not find a cause for mocking me? but God grant that you may have good reason for your laughter."

"Now that you invoke Heaven," said the Duchess seriously, "I think with you, and refer you to Omnipotence; *that* does not remain in England, Sarah. Dry up your tears, therefore, and follow me to the ship, to which we must go directly, for I have been told that the Captain has weighed his anchor and is ready to set sail."

The Duchess now took the little Rosa in her arms, who twittered like a bird in the morning, and evinced her pleasure by all manner of inarticulate sounds. The sight of them raised a murmur of approbation amongst the crowd that are usually collected about a port at the sailing of a vessel, and many respectfully made room for them, while others said aloud, "It was a

shame that England should expose its fairest jewels to the waves, and suffer them to be driven to the opposite coast ; the best of the land were flying by thousands on account of religious persecution ; and those, whom the sea did not carry off, were swallowed by the flames." Some had either seen Catherine before, or had inquired her rank, for the name of Suffolk was often repeated ; and the unfortunate Jane Grey, too, was spoken of with more freedom than prudence. The crowd grew thicker and thicker, and some, planting themselves in the Duchess' way, eyed her and the child narrowly. Single words, which dropt here and there, were unintelligible to her, and contained allusions to a something of which she could give no solution, but all this increased her anxiety in more ways than one. She looked timidly about her and flung a parting glance at her countrymen, whose familiar language she was now to lose for a long time, perhaps never to hear again, and at this thought the tears gushed involuntarily from her eyes ; to

hide them she turned away her head, as if she had something to say to her companion behind her, but scarcely had her eyes taken that direction than they were struck by an object which so completely took away all self-possession, that she tottered forwards and fell half senseless into the arms of the Captain, who met her on the deck.

“ With whom were you talking ? ” she at last stammered, after a few minutes had allowed her to recover, and holding the anxious Sarah by the hand ; “ and what did he say to you ? ”

“ Which of the thousand gapers do you mean ? I have fobbed them off by dozens, and can boast of having set their acuteness many a riddle ; but amongst them all, I did not perceive one that seemed worthy of exciting your attention in so high a degree.”

“ Perhaps not *worthy*, but the unworthiest, Sarah, may be an obstacle in our way. If I do not mistake, that little, decrepit old man, who looks as if he did not dare to interrupt the ha-

mility of his earthly course by a single look at Heaven, is the Bishop of Chichester, the bitterest persecutor of Cranmer, and on that account the favourite of the Queen; she constantly employs him in her secret projects, and who can say with what purpose he is now going about the country? Tell me, therefore, Sarah, what was it he said to you?"

"He asked me in a whisper—'How long it was since you had borne that child, and with so near a prospect of a second?'—I replied, that I saw nothing in it; I always supposed that the swan of Iceland brought such little creatures, and he might as well knock twice as once at a bed-room door. The Bishop measured me with a doubtful look, and, seeing I could not suppress an arch smile, asked still more pressingly than before, 'how long the child had been given to your care?' at which I shrugged my shoulders, and told him, I had been in your service a few days only. He would have continued his inquiries, but at that moment

your Grace looked round, and, as your pale appearance alarmed me and you quickened your steps, I hurried on to follow you; the crowd increasing, the troublesome questioner found himself cut off; but whoever he is, your Grace is as inaccessible to him here at sea, as if you were in another world."

"That's true, too, my good Sarah," said the Duchess, recovering from her fright, and drawing her breath deeply;—"but only HERE,—the child, too!—that seemed to strike him! What was it to him? These priests must be meddling in every thing."

Rosamond was now laid in a cradle at the Duchess's feet, and seemed with her pleased cooing to answer the thoughtful questions of her protectress. The motion of the vessel agreed with the child just as much as it usually offends grown-up people, and its liveliness drew the attention of all aboard; every one, from the cabin-boy to the oldest seaman, evinced an interest in it, and would stand over the cradle,

talking and playing with the little creature ; but more particularly a hard-favoured man, who, in coming hastily on deck, had stumbled against Sarah, a mischance that had given occasion to sundry excuses and civilities shown with as much good will as handiness. He was observed to go backwards and forwards constantly to the cradle, and look at the child with deep emotion.

Catherine might perhaps have noticed this more, had not her attention been called upon, and still less pleasantly, by an evident commotion amongst the seamen. It was impossible not to see that they were occupied by some near danger ; there was no end to the calling, and running, and climbing, and handling of ropes, while the doubtful mutterings of those about her thrilled to her very heart. Presently the whispers grew more distinct, till at last the cry was loud and common, that the dreaded weather was coming on, the wind was visibly shifting every minute, and it was to be feared

that the storm would burst sooner or later and drive them back upon the English coast. Catherine trembled so violently and was so completely beside herself, that even Sarah, who did not as yet see the peril quite close, encouraged her mistress and, in comparison with her, seemed stout and collected. But it was not long before the scene underwent such a fearful change, that every one was stunned by its terror and lost all consideration for the anxiety of others.

A dreadful rush in the air had scarcely announced the near storm, when it burst at once through the clouds with tremendous rattle. The electric vapours were piled thicker and thicker upon each other, and the sky seemed to be one immeasurable mountain, shaking its threatening head and contending face to face with the rising earth, for the waves towered up from the deep and rolled the immense masses chaotically together, so that the ship seemed to totter between rocks, and the space, in which

it moved, looked like an abyss ready every moment to bury the trembling creature in its depths.

To this gloomy convulsion of the elements, which filled the soul with uncertain fears, succeeded a shrill whistling and a deafening crash, with a wild shrieking on board the vessel, that the lips of the Duchess were closed by excess of terror, and Sarah sank down by her side, almost senseless. The only indifferent person was the little Rosa, who, after having cried at the first tumult, now looked about in astonishment and shewed her delight by her cooing. The stranger, who had from the first taken so much notice of her, was still constantly by the cradle; and whether it was his perpetual smiling, or the attention which he paid the little thing, certainly the sight of him exercised an irresistible influence over its humour. It smiled whenever it saw him, and this smile, accompanied by the brilliant glancing of its eyes, that grew larger and brighter every moment, seemed

to the sailors to be a good omen. They said, jestingly, that " St. Elm's fire had shown itself in the eyes of the little one, and that they were the twin stars which bring good-luck to the seafarer."

But although these stars might brighten their anxiety for the moment, and however childish sweetness might influence credulity no less childish, yet the uproar of the elements did not cease the more for that. On the contrary, the storm grew more violent, the helmsman more alarmed, and it soon became clear to every one, that nothing was left for it but to return to the shore they had just quitted and there seek a harbour. This declaration fell like a thunderbolt on most of the passengers, who, now losing all other considerations, openly avowed themselves to be exiles and did not conceal that they less feared death on the open sea than perishing in the flames at home.

It almost appeared as if this wish, so boldly uttered, was likely to be realized, for the ship

was scarcely able to make head against the fury of the waves; and for a short time despair was at its height. Although they had already tacked about for the shore, which now lay but a little ahead of them, so that a few minutes only seemed requisite to their safety, yet the sea broke with such violence about them, that all lost their courage. The ship fired guns of distress, the seamen sank exhausted from the fruitless labours of many hours, and, though others took their place, they had no better success. Night came on and every one began to despair, when, at last, pilot-boats put off to them from the nearest harbour, and they were lucky enough to cast anchor in Portland road without any material damage.

In the midst of this strife of elements, the Duchess had regained her self-possession. Commending her soul to God, she left all to the destiny of the hour, and suffered the storm to pass over as it might. But in reality her situation had

undergone no change; for, once upon English land, she ran into the mouth of new dangers. She had not, however, much time to think of herself, for on the ground beside her lay Sarah, incapable of moving a limb, and as if lamed by convulsive affections. The poor girl was forced to be carried to land, and this excited observation, for the people, supposing her to be dead, crowded about her with questions; and hence arose, through idle chattering, that very publicity which Catherine wished above all things to avoid.

The Duchess herself would have remained behind, unprotected, with the child, had not the man, who had so much admired Rosamond, exerted himself to bring them to a place of safety. It was in a little room of a pawnbroker's house, not far from the shore; and when, on parting from her conductor, she asked his name, the reply was—"Ralph Partridge is only too happy in being able to serve a lady

of your Grace's rank and condition, and one, moreover, whom he has been fortunate enough to see before."

The Duchess blushed at the latter part of this declaration, and said, not without visible inquietude,—“Seen me! When, my good friend? I have lost all recollection of it.”

“That may well be,” replied Ralph; “nor will I venture to affirm that your Grace's looks have ever strayed so low as to me, for it is unlikely you should ever have entered the poor house of the inn-keeper, Ralph Partridge; but you past it when the wedding-guests conducted Lady Jane Grey from the country-house of her father to her bridal chamber in Sion Abbey.”

“Then!” sighed Catherine; “And it is from that,” she added smiling, “you pretend to know me? Be candid, my good friend, you have learnt who I am, but tell me by what chance it was?”

Ah, your Grace is too well acquainted with the world for any thing in it to be concealed

from you ; but unfortunately the world stands on the same footing with you in that respect. It knows you to a hair, and therefore, if you will follow the advice of a poor man, stay no longer on this uncertain ground than is absolutely requisite to get again on board a ship that is ready to put to sea."

" Very good, mine honest friend, but what am I to do with this sick girl in our present circumstances? To call in a surgeon would be dangerous, and yet, where besides am I to look for help ?"

" If your Grace will permit me, I have so far served my apprenticeship to a surgeon, that I may venture to give her a cordial which will soon set her upon her legs again."

Catherine consented, and he rather, as he produced a certificate that showed he really had some knowledge of surgery. He poured a few drops from a flask into a saucer, which he held over the lamp till they grew hot, and then rubbed Sarah's temples and pulses with them, where-

upon she opened her eyes and in a few minutes had completely recovered her senses. Ralph triumphantly set the saucer upon the table before him, glancing alternately from Sarah to the Duchess with a look that seemed to say, "Well! do I understand my business? Shan't I, in a strange country, do for one of those surgeons that are blindly followed and flocked to by thousands?" The Duchess smiled graciously, and asked, "What recompense she was to give him?"

"No other," he quickly replied, "than the permission to go abroad in your service, for at present your Grace is in a bad way with your followers; one has preferred the stake at home, to a second time undergoing the pains of a sea-storm, and has taken himself off to castle Barbican; the other, indeed, with his sallow cheeks and spindle shanks, seems something more of an amphibious animal, and in his double nature not to fear the water; but, to speak it fairly, the organs of this sort of animal are too little

developed for one to expect overmuch from their sagacity—”

“While you,” interrupted the Duchess, “have given unusual proofs of acuteness. Well, Partridge, you may take the place of the faithless Baptist.”

Ralph made a profound bow and protested the most unshaken fidelity and devotion. In the meantime Sarah, by way of employing her hands, had been playing with the cup on the table before her, and, as it appeared to be silver and of great purity, she began to examine it more closely, and at last whispered to her mistress, “Is it not strange? on this cup, as on the linen of our little foundling, are the marks of armorial bearings carefully erased, and, below, the intersected rose-sprigs.”

“Let me see it,” said the Duchess, and holding the cup nearer to the light, saw that it was silver and of Italian workmanship. “Where, in all the world, have I seen that cup before? for somewhere I have seen it; but where, I cannot call

to mind. Just as little do I remember which it is of our nobles that lately introduced from France the rose-sprig about his arms."

"And how does it come here?" said Sarah, in whose brain a thousand conjectures were afloat.

The Duchess was still meditating on their new discovery, and trying to think to whom it could have originally belonged, when the master of the house entered and announced to his guests that on account of the strict orders issued by the government in regard to all going abroad, he must request the lady's name and the purpose of her journey; it was necessary, he said, to give in both, to avoid unpleasant consequences to himself.

While Catherine, thus unexpectedly reminded of her dangerous situation, began to think with herself what was to be done, Ralph Partridge fixed his eye, keenly on the host, and, without allowing him time for farther protests, exclaimed purposely with a loud voice, as if in the surprise of joy, "What, my good friend Davis! I have not

seen you since the procession of Lady Dudley, when you rode before the great Northumberland and proclaimed the Lady Jane."

"It may be," said the host, confused and in a low tone to induce the other to speak in the same way; "It may be on that day,—"

"Yes, by my tróth was it; on that very day we spoke together. Afterwards, when the Duke mounted the scaffold and the Dudleys were imprisoned, you got out of the way and sought a refuge in the poor inn of Ralph Partridge. I was not at home, and as you could not trust in my wife's having too much consideration for the adherents of Suffolk, you would not wait for my return. I am doubly glad, therefore, that we meet here so unexpectedly."

"Certainly," replied the other; "certainly, I am glad too; but the prejudice against the followers of the reformed doctrines is so great in our town, that I would not advise you, any more than her Grace, to abide longer than is absolutely necessary under the roof of a poor fellow who

has but just saved himself from a hard persecution, and owes his life and safety to unremitting watchfulness."

"You have done," said Ralph, "like many of those people of distinction for whom you always had such a mighty hankering; you have denied your religion and now side again with the Papists. Well, every one to his own taste: but still you won't wish to break quite with the other party, for it may so chance that it lifts up its head again, and it is always well to have two strings to your bow. Therefore, my prudent Davis, tell me how we may secure her Grace from intruders and let her enjoy a little rest after all the troubles she has gone through."

"By my troth, Ralph Partridge, I answer for nothing, and will have no more to do with this dangerous business."

"Not if you could help it, I believe you. But recollect, we hold each other by the hand, and if one falls he drags his neighbour after him."

"It is strange," said the Duchess with her

peculiar dignity, "it is strange to hear you contesting about that which concerns me only. Who told you that I wished to abuse any longer the unwilling hospitality of this man? And whose protection have I entreated, that it should occur to one to refuse, or to the other to extort it? Go, Sir, and let me have my reckoning; I will not put your pusillanimity to the proof another instant, but shall return to the vessel that brought me here, and will yet see who can hinder me from making good my civil rights in the company of the Falcon. Captain Johnson will not suffer a hair on the head of any member in his community to be injured. Go, Sir," she repeated, waving him off with her hand; but in the next moment she added, "Yet stop, you can inform me on one point; pray tell me how that silver cup came into your hands?"

Davis changed colour at this question, but, collecting himself immediately, he replied; "In truth it would be no easy matter for me to give account of things that are quite beyond my

knowledge. I am a broker, and traffic in all manner of wares ; amongst them, of course, are various utensils, which are either worn out or have grown superfluous to their owners, and are exchanged for other goods either from fickleness or necessity. Many things go through my hands in this way that I have never seen ; and as to the cup, I never observed it till now, and rather thought that you had brought it with you than found it here."

" If you set no particular value upon it, you will perhaps not object to part with it to me for a price of your own fixing."

" As to that, the bargain is as good as settled," he replied, laughing indifferently, and named a tolerably high price, which the Duchess was contented to overlook, and paid the money at once. At the same time she hurried him to a settlement for her short abode in his house, and was actually about to quit it when a circumstance happened which compelled her to give up her purpose. A sudden tumult filled the streets,

and swelling nearer, like a flood of waters, put an end to all other thoughts with the negotiators. At first they looked at each other in surprise, but their excited attention was soon drawn more immediately to what was passing in the street. There was no doubt as to what was going on; a riot threatened individual safety with dangers that were rather felt than defined. Partridge instantly put out the lights; no one dared to breathe; and thus they all stood strangers to one another, each lost in his own thoughts, and without daring by a syllable to tell his terrors. In the street, however, the repetition of certain words gave them plainly to understand what had set the people in this commotion.—“Out with them! Out with them!” resounded on all sides like an alarm bell.—“The heretics just landed!—Where are they?—Death to those who hide them!”

Davis made a movement to leave the room, but Ralph, who had approached him unperceived, now caught him by the arm, and ex-

claimed in an under tone, "Not a step! If you prize your life, not a single step!"

"'Tis because I do prize it, fool," replied Davis struggling to get loose; "it is because I do prize it that I will go down, and not by staying here supply coals for the fire that threatens my poor house."

"You will?" exclaimed Partridge, grinning with rage; "away, then; but I go with you though we both burn at the same stake."

Davis, however, burst from him and stumbled towards the door, when voices were heard below, shouting, "Whoever lays a finger on the fugitives, we'll fling him into the sea! What! shall our town bear the shame of such disgraceful inhospitality? The people of Portland will have no traitors amongst them."—The Duchess gently breathed again; but a cry was heard from the opposite party, — "Traitors! Take care you don't talk your heads off, people of Portland. Is it treachery to cleanse the land from heretics, as the Queen has ordered us? Away, dogs, away,

stand off from the doors and let us go into the houses ; we have strict orders for it."

" Let me go for your own sakes," said Davis, whom Partridge again clung to with both arms and was dragging farther into the room ; " you hear ! there is no hope for you ! they have already broken into my neighbour's house. Ugh ! how it sounds when they thunder so against the doors !"

" Ugh ! and how *that* sounds !" said Partridge, mocking him ; when at this moment several shots fell in the street, and the spirited youth rushed into the town from all sides, on foot and on horseback, to oppose this crying injustice.

" Who dares ?" they exclaimed, " who dares to break open our doors ? If it be a royal command, it has been surreptitiously obtained to disgrace the rule of Henry's daughter. Disperse, ye papistical blood-suckers, or by Heaven we fire upon you, and you kiss the earth without a blessing."

" Rebels ! Rebels !" shouted their opponents ;

"they set themselves against the Queen's mandates! They blaspheme the Holy Father! Curses and destruction on the apostates!"

"If Davis have betrayed us!" whispered the Duchess to Sarah; "If all this tumult concern the child and me!—We are lost should they discover our retreat."

The darkness in the chamber and the tumult without and within must have broken the sleep of the little Rosamond, for she suddenly awoke with so shrill a scream that all were startled and the Duchess gave herself up for lost; and, indeed, the tumult about the house increased so much that even Partridge lost all self-possession and suffered Davis to slip from him; the latter immediately gained the door of the room and escaped.

All stood for several minutes in mute despair, expecting the last decisive blow which could not but fall shortly. It was, however, impossible in the increasing uproar and the din of voices to distinguish which was the victorious party;

hope, besides, slumbered so deeply in Catherine's bosom, that she saw only the certain approach of misery, and, covering the child with kisses, devoted both it and herself to death. But Ralph listened more keenly in the direction of the window ; at length he ventured gently near it, opened it a little, and, with his ear at the crevice, for some time accompanied the progress of the uproar with a breathless intensity of all the senses.

“ We are saved !” he at length stammered in a voice that was scarcely audible. “ *Here*, we have no longer occasion to fear any thing. Davis has fallen into the hands of his avengers. I heard him squeak, as an old acquaintance of mine, a Captain in one of Northumberland's troops, whose voice I could not forget, seized him by the throat and handed him over to his people. The gallows-bird probably wanted to betray us by way of saving his own neck, but now he has got it himself. Courage ! courage !” he added, hastening to the Duchess, who sank into Sarah's

arms, sobbing loudly;—"We may well laugh now, for even on the stormy sea we were not nearer ruin than amongst these men-hunters."

"But, my good friend," said the Duchess, drying up her tears, and looking at him with smiles, "what makes you so certain that our friends have got the upper hand?"

"I only know thus much; the Captain is already coming up the stairs, and we are all as safe under his protection as if we were on the other side the water."

The door did, indeed, open; and there entered, with a light in his hand, the brave soldier who had stopt at Ralph's house on his march to Newmarket, and had then so plainly manifested the integrity of his sentiments. After having cast a quick glance at the different persons in the room, he said, and not without a slight touch of awkwardness, arising perhaps from the noble mien and bearing of the Duchess; "It grieves me to see your Grace in such alarm, but the devils in the street below cared neither

for rank nor person, and it is lucky for you that they did not execute their plans; for, to speak plainly, their aim was particularly against those who seemed to them to be dangerous from their influence over others. Therefore,——”

“Therefore,” interrupted Partridge, “her Grace wishes for nothing so much as to be under your protection, being convinced that you would just as little expose her as this innocent child here to the abuse of these furious miscreants.”

“The devil! is it you, mine host?” exclaimed the Captain, recognising Partridge, and without regard to the presence of the Duchess; “what, have you cut matters short at home and left your scolding wife? Well, I wish you joy with all my heart. But to come back to the business in hand.—As to my protection, it does not reach far, and cannot extend beyond the next few hours.”

“Oh, Heavens! what then will become of us? The night quickly passes and, even if its darkness should protect us, the dawn of day so

much the more surely delivers the fugitives into their enemy's hands."

"Why, I think," said the Captain, "we may keep the road and the harbour clear till the next evening, for just so long it will be before the militia arrives to strengthen the garrison, the half of which flocked to the assistance of the distressed Protestants. I myself,—I am not ashamed to say it,—came over to the side of the exiles against whom the elements were hardly so cruel as their persecutors. I repeat therefore what I set out with,—nothing remains for her Grace but to persuade the Captain to put to sea directly; and, believe me, the bottomless ocean offers you more safety just now than the strongest castle in all England."

The well-intended counsel of the Captain at first alarmed the Duchess, who could not so soon reconcile to herself the idea of a sea-voyage, but she subdued her feelings so far as to show a readiness to concur in any measures which circumstances might call for; she only asked as to

the means which must be employed to hasten the sailing of the ship then at anchor there, as it was more than probable that the Captain would wish to allow his crew some time to recruit themselves.

“ Nothing more easy,” said the soldier ; “ nothing in the world more easy ; you have only to represent to the Captain, that if he delays longer he will infallibly be made to answer for having assisted the exiles to fly their country, an accusation against which his Belgian flag will as little protect him, as it will against the violence of the riotous fanatics.”

The Duchess looked around in doubt for a messenger who would venture to bear her commission to the vessel.

“ I guess your thoughts,” said the soldier ; “ and if you can make up your mind to follow me directly, I will undertake, supported by your authority, to settle the affair. Now is the best time. There is yet darkness to hide our steps, the frightened priests are yet staggered, and the

people waver here and there irresolutely. The way is open; quick, therefore, and my word for it, I bring you on board the packet undiscovered."

The Duchess took courage and subdued her inward struggles. With the tears lingering in her eyes, and compelling her trembling lips to speak, she said, as she gave her hand to the Captain, "I see it well; there is no rest for me in England."

She hurried forward, when Sarah, with the child in her arms, threw herself at her feet, and clinging to them, besought her with loud lamentation not to expose her life a second time to the fury of the sea.

"Hear me," she cried; "hear me for your own sake,—for the sake of your poor Sarah.—Whither would you go? In such an hour, to venture yourself with strange men in the riotous streets? Do you know where they would lead you? or whether *they, they themselves*, are not your worst enemies?"

“ Silence, silly girl, your thoughts are in confusion; you know not how to value people. Go, go; and let me pass on my way.”

“ My dearest mistress,” sobbed Sarah, still at the Duchess’ feet, and almost beside herself with fear and terror; “ My beloved, my unfortunate mistress! For the sake of Heaven, hear me but a moment! — Supposing that these strangers conduct you safely, do you yet entirely forget your situation and what you have suffered? Oh, in truth, Sir Richard will owe you little thanks for having thus exposed the dearest hopes of his heart, and made, perhaps, both yourself and him for ever miserable. From pity to yourself, dear mistress, follow my advice but this once! I pray for nothing but a few hours’ rest.”

“ Rest, Sarah!” said the Duchess, unable to restrain her tears; “ you have heard it yourself, rest is no more for me here. Come, come, Sir,” she added, collecting herself; “ let us leave all

cares behind us in England. Perhaps a distant coast may become our home."

She gently pushed Sarah out of the way with her hand, and hastened, without once looking round, down the steps and through the street ; and when she got on board the vessel scarcely recollected that she had heard or seen any thing.



NOTES.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

R

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

For your writing and reading, let that appear when there is
no need of such vanity—SHAKSPEARE.

*Will shortly pass to Sion House, the future habitation of
the youthful pair.—Page 2.*

SION HOUSE.—“ In 1553, on the attainure and execution of the Duke of Somerset, it became the property of the crown, and Queen Mary settled Nuns in it, who were expelled on the accession of Elizabeth, but with this favourable circumstance, that they were permitted to carry their treasures with them. James the First gave it to the Earl of Northumberland and his heirs for ever; and in 1680, Inigo Jones was employed to re-build a great part of it. The house is built on the spot where the church of the monastery stood, on the north side of the Thames; and the ground, where the old garden was, is greatly enlarged. The great gallery extends the whole length of the east front, containing, besides many fine paintings, a vast quantity of

the finest old china, of the most curious patterns, that were ever brought into England."—BUCK's *Antiquities*, vol. i.

It was called also Sion Abbey, and was situated in Warwickshire.

It would have surprised nobody if she had brought to the son-in-law of her husband's daughter the name and title which he has now received from that daughter herself.—p. 7.

This complicated pedigree is a simple matter to a German writer, whose language can express any degree of relationship up to the time of Noah, or even beyond, if it be necessary. Sir Charles Brandon, afterwards Duke of Suffolk, who was a favourite with the English Bluebeard, seems to have had his master's partiality for matrimony; he was thrice married. The first wife was Mary, daughter to Henry the Seventh, sister to Henry the Eighth, and widow of Louis the Twelfth, King of France. By her he had a daughter*, the Frances of this tale, married to the Marquis of Dorset, from which marriage proceeded Lady Jane Grey, so that the husband of the latter was, as the Baroness calls him, a *great son-*

* I had inadvertently copied the German name Francisca and did not observe the error till the first sheet had passed through the press. As it was then too late to make any change in the earlier pages, I thought it better to continue the same name for the sake of uniformity.

-in-law. "It is a shame to the English language that we have not a less clumsy way of expressing a relationship, of which we have occasion to think and speak so frequently."

"Doctor Fagius," exclaimed the innkeeper, in surprise.—p. 8.

Paul Fagius, whose German name was Buchlein, was born at Rhein Zabern, in 1504. His father was a schoolmaster. He came over to England with Bucer, and was to have joined with him in a new translation of the Scriptures; Fagius taking the Old Testament, and Bucer the New. But this scheme was defeated by the sudden death of both professors. He died at Cambridge in 1550. Bucer, who is mentioned in a subsequent page, was born in the year 1491 at Schlestadt, and died in the year 1551, at Cambridge, where he was professor of theology. He commenced life as a Dominican monk, but soon became a convert to Luther's doctrines. He then, for some time, occupied the place of preacher to the Elector Frederick of the Palatinate; was subsequently for twenty years professor at the university of Strasburgh, till Edward the Sixth invited him over, at the instigation of Archbishop Cranmer. Although he was in the spirit of those times a polemic, yet Cardinal Contarini called him the most learned theologian amongst the heretics; and under the name of Aretius Filinus, he gave a comment on the Psalms. His first wife had

been a man; his second, a widow; and after her death he even married a third time. During his life he was an object of great veneration, and it was not the least of his good fortune that he died before Mary came to the throne of England, for it was pretty evident what fate the living man might have expected, when, six years after his death, she caused the body to be disinterred and burnt, to shew her orthodox abhorrence of Protestantism.

In the midst of them they led a woman who had fetters on her hands and feet.—p. 16.

“There was a woman accused of heretical pravity, called Joan Bucer, or Joan of Kent, who was so pertinacious, that the commissioners could make no impression upon her. Her doctrine was—“That Christ was not truly incarnate of the Virgin, whose flesh, being the outward man, was sinfully begotten, and born in sin; and consequently he could take none of it: but the word, by the consent of the inward man of the Virgin, was made flesh.” This opinion, it would seem, is not orthodox; and there was a necessity for delivering the woman to the flames for maintaining it. But the young King, though in such tender years, had more sense than all his counsellors and preceptors; and he long refused to sign the warrant for her execution. Cranmer was employed to persuade him to compliance; and he said there was a great difference between errors in other points of divinity and those which were in direct con-

tradiction to the apostle's creed: these latter were impieties against God, which the prince, being God's deputy, ought to repress; in like manner as inferior magistrates were bound to punish offences against the King's person. Edward, overcome by importunity, at last submitted, though with tears in his eyes; and he told Cranmer, that if any wrong were done, the guilt should lie entirely on his head. The primate, after making a new effort to reclaim the woman from her errors, and finding her obstinate against all his arguments, at last committed her to the flames."—HUME, vol. iv. p. 324.

It is not enough that the tapers are, &c.—p. 19.

"Orders were issued by council, that candles should no longer be carried about on Candlemas-day; ashes on Ash-Wednesday; palms on Palm-Sunday."—HUME, vol. iv. p. 308.

An order was also issued by council for the removal of all images from the churches; an innovation which was much desired by the reformers.

The preaching of the Pole A-Lasco.—p. 21.

John A-Lasco was a Polish nobleman, who quitted his country and titles to take upon himself the office of a reformer. He was invited over to England with his congregation, to the number of five hundred, by King Edward, at the instigation of Cranmer.

*Sir Richard arose and stood upright before the
Duchess.—p. 29.*

At this time he was not a knight but a plain esquire, and, as Banks has it, "a person singularly accomplished and learned in the French, Italian, and Latin languages."

When I left Barbican, &c.—p. 30.

In regard to Barbican the Baroness has committed three blunders; first in considering it as remote from London; secondly, in placing it, as she afterwards does, close upon the banks of the Thames; and thirdly, in calling it Castle Barbican. Barbican was a *general* name for any watch-tower; many of these Barbicans stood in the line of the London Wall, as long as the city retained such a defence, but one of these towers left its generic name to the spot on which it had been situated, and here, amongst other buildings, was a castle, belonging to the Suffolk family. The ground is now occupied by several houses of inferior order and still bears the name of Barbican.

The character of the Duchess, too, is precisely the reverse of that we know of her. Instead of being mild and prudent, as the Baroness represents her, she was a zealous Protestant and an open scoffer of the Catholics. She was the sole daughter of Lord Willoughby of Eresby by the Lady Mary Salines, a Spaniard. The family may be traced up to the time of Ralph de Willeghby of Will-

legbby in Lincolnshire, in the time of King John, and appears to have been not a little distinguished under the successive princes.

Young as she is, she has studied with much zeal the fathers of the church.—p. 30.

Roger Ascham, tutor to the Lady Elizabeth, having one day paid her a visit, found her employed in reading Plato, while the rest of the family were engaged in a party of hunting in the park.—HUME, vol. iv. p. 369.

“Her heart, full of passion for literature and the elegant arts, and of tenderness towards her husband, who was deserving of her affections, had never opened itself to the flattering allurements of ambition, and the intelligence of her elevation to the throne was nowise agreeable to her. She even refused to accept of the present; pleaded the preferable title of the two princesses; expressed her dread of the consequences attending an enterprise so dangerous, not to say so criminal, and desired to remain in the private station in which she was born. Overcome at last by the entreaties rather than the reasons of father and father-in-law, and above all of her husband, she submitted to their will, and was prevailed on to relinquish her own judgment.”—HUME, vol. iv. p. 369.

She fled back again to Kenning Hall.—p. 58.

Historically true. Thence Mary fled to Framlingham, only to repose as a Queen in triumph.

You have no time to lose, for we are conducting her to the Tower, to the royal dwelling of all her ancestors.—p. 63.

“ It was then usual for the King’s of England, after their accession, to pass the first days in the Tower, and Northumberland immediately conveyed thither the new sovereign.—HUME, vol. iv. p. 369.

Remember the tanner, Ket, in Norfolk.—p. 71.

“ The insurrection in Norfolk rose to a still greater height, and was attended with greater acts of violence. The populace were at first excited, as in other places, by complaints against enclosures; but finding their numbers amount to twenty thousand, they grew insolent, and proceeded to more exorbitant pretensions. They required the suppression of the gentry, the placing of new counsellors about the King, and the re-establishment of the ancient rites. One Ket, a tanner, had assumed the government over them; and he exercised his authority with the utmost arrogance and outrage. Having taken possession of Moushold-hill, near Norwich, he erected his tribunal under an old oak, thence called the oak of reformation; and summoning the gentry to appear before him, he gave such decrees as might be expected from his character and situation. The Marquis of Northampton was first ordered against him; but met with a repulse in an action where Lord Sheffield was

killed. The protector affected popularity, and cared not to appear in person against the rebels; he therefore sent the Earl of Warwick at the head of 6000 men, levied for the wars against Scotland; and he thereby afforded his mortal enemy an opportunity of increasing his reputation and character. Warwick having tried some skirmishes with the rebels, at last made a general attack upon them, and put them to flight. Two thousand fell in the action and pursuit: Ket was hanged at Norwich Castle; nine of his followers on the boughs of the oak of reformation; and the insurrection was entirely suppressed."—HUME, vol. iv. p. 331.

Mary receives the liveliest marks of submission at Framlingham, whither she was unfortunately suffered to escape from Kenning Hall.—p. 73.

"Happily the Earl of Arundel sent her private intelligence, both of her brother's death and of the conspiracy formed against her: she immediately made haste to retire; and she arrived by quick journeys, first at Kenning Hall, in Norfolk, then at Framlingham, in Suffolk."—HUME, p. 368.

"It appeared," faltered Sussex, "that it was the hangman."—p. 88.

The Baroness, by a blunder not unusual with better writers, has here transferred the customs of her own

country to England. The German hangman, or rather headsman,—for hanging is not the fashion in Germany,—wears a red cloak, an honour to which Jack Ketch has never aspired, whether he officiate with the axe or the rope. But this is not the only instance of the lady's ignorance of English habits, or it could hardly be imputed as a fault to her that she was unacquainted with a trade which Abhorson professes to be a mystery. Partridge, the innkeeper, is with her, Sir Partridge; the Duchess is the Lady; the Thames is described as if it were an American river; and Archbishop Cranmer as a bishop; but it is useless to follow up the subject on so trifling an occasion.

*Do not chide me for keeping back my father and
husband.*—p. 96.

“It was there concluded that the Duke of Suffolke with certain other noblemen should go towards the Lady Mary to fetch her up to the Tower; this was first determined; but by night of the same day, the said voyage of the Duke of Suffolke, was cleane dissolved by the special means of the Lady Jane, his daughter, who taking the matter heavily, with weeping teares, made request to the whole Councell, that her father might tarry at home in her company; whereupon the Councell perswaded with the Duke of Northumberland to take that voyage upon him, saying that no man was so fit, therefore, because that he had atchieved the victory in

Norfolke once already and was therefore so feared that none durst once lift up their weapon against him.”—Stow’s *Annales*, Edward vi.

“Northumberland, hitherto blinded by ambition saw at last the danger gather round him, and knew not to what hand to turn himself. He had levied forces which were assembled at London; but dreading the cabals of the courtiers and counsellors, whose compliance he knew had been entirely the result of fear or artifice, he was resolved to keep near the person of the Lady Jane, and sent Suffolk to command the army. But the counsellors who wished to remove him, working on the filial tenderness of Jane, magnified to her the danger to which her father would be exposed; and represented that Northumberland, who had gained reputation by formerly suppressing a rebellion in those parts, was more proper to command in that enterprise. The Duke himself, who knew the slender capacity of Suffolk, began to think that none but himself was able to encounter the present danger; and he agreed to take on him the command of the troops.”—HUME, vol. iv. p. 370.

A commotion raised in Kent, &c.—p. 121.

“Sir Thomas Wyat proposed to raise Kent; Sir Peter Carew, Devonshire; and they engaged the Duke of Suffolk, by the hopes of recovering the crown for the Lady Jane, to attempt raising the midland counties. Carew’s impatience, or apprehensions, engaged him to

break the concert, and to rise in arms before the time appointed: he was soon suppressed by the Earl of Bedford, and constrained to fly into France. On this intelligence Suffolk, dreading an arrest, suddenly left the town with his brothers, Lord Thomas and Lord Leonard Grey, and endeavoured to raise the people in the counties of Warwick and Leicester, where his interest lay; but he was so closely pursued by the Earl of Huntingdon, at the head of 300 horse, that he was obliged to disperse his followers; and being discovered in his concealment, he was carried prisoner to London. Wyatt was at first more successful in his attempt; and having published a declaration at Maidstone in Kent, against the Queen's evil counsellors, and against the Spanish match, without any mention of religion, the people began to flock to his standard. The Duke of Norfolk, with Sir Henry Jernegan, was sent against him, at the head of the guards and some other troops, reinforced with 500 Londoners commanded by Bret: and he came within sight of the rebels at Rochester, where they had fixed their head-quarters. Sir George Harper here pretended to desert from them; but having secretly gained Bret, these two malcontents so wrought on the Londoners, that the whole body deserted to Wyatt, and declared that they would not contribute to enslave their native country. Norfolk, dreading the contagion of the example, immediately retreated with his troops, and took shelter in the city. After this proof of the dispo-

sitions of the people, especially of the Londoners, who were mostly Protestants, Wyatt was encouraged to proceed : he led his forces to Southwark, where he required of the Queen that she should put the Tower into his hands, should deliver four counsellors as hostages, and, in order to insure the liberty of the nation, should immediately marry an Englishman. Finding that the bridge was secured against him, and that the city was overawed, he marched up to Kingston, where he passed the river with 4000 men; and returning towards London, hoped to encourage his partisans, who had engaged to declare for him. He had imprudently wasted so much of time at Southwark, and in his march from Kingston, that the critical season, on which all popular commotions depend, was entirely lost. Though he entered Westminster without resistance, his followers, finding that no person of note joined him, insensibly fell off, and he was at last seized near Temple-bar by Sir Maurice Berkeley. Four hundred persons are said to have suffered for this rebellion; four hundred more were conducted before the Queen with ropes about their necks, and falling on their knees, received a pardon and were dismissed."—HUME, vol. iv. p. 390.

I am on the way to Germany with more than five hundred of my London flock.—p. 124.

"John A-Lasco was first silenced, then ordered to depart the kingdom with his congregation. The greater

part of the foreign Protestants followed him; and the nation thereby lost many useful hands for arts and manufactures. Several English Protestants also took shelter in foreign parts; and every thing bore a dismal aspect for the reformation.—HUME, vol. iv. p. 379.

Her hands, fair as wax, were folded over those of Dudley, who knelt at her feet, and watched every motion of her bosom.—p. 146.

“ On the day of her execution, her husband, Lord Guilford, desired permission to see her; but she refused her consent, and informed him by a message, that the tenderness of their parting would overcome the fortitude of both, and would too much unbend their minds from that constancy which their approaching end required of them: their separation, she said, would be only for a moment; and they should rejoin each other in a scene where death, disappointment, and misfortunes, could no longer have access to them, or disturb their eternal felicity. It had been intended to execute the Lady Jane and Lord Guilford together on the same scaffold at Tower-hill; but the council, dreading the compassion of the people for their youth, beauty, innocence, and noble birth, changed their orders, and gave directions that she should be beheaded within the verge of the Tower. She saw her husband led to execution; and having given him from the window some token of her remembrance, she waited with tranquillity till her own appointed hour should bring her to a like fate. She even saw his headless

body carried back in a cart; and found herself more confirmed by the reports which she heard of the constancy of his end, than shaken by so tender and melancholy a spectacle."—HUME, vol. iv. p. 392.

*And fancied she saw the pale shadows of the wild
huntsmen.—p. 185.*

The Wild Host, or the Wild Rout, is a superstition common throughout Germany, but as much out of its place in England, as the grand Mufti would be, or the Cham of Tartary. It is a midnight hunt of certain evil-doers, royal and noble, who in their life-time had indulged their hunting predilections to the injury of the lower classes; they are attended by a spectral equipage of dogs and all the other appendages of the chase; and their cries are heard at night to the great terror of the peasants. The Danes, too, have the same superstition, and with them King Abel has the diabolical honour of leading the route. In France, at one time, King Arthur came under a similar suspicion.

*Here in the bed-straw, at the foot of the
bed, &c.—p. 192.*

Amongst the lower and middling classes in Germany, simple straw occupies the place of our English mattresses, while a feather-bed, laid over the sleeper, supplies the want of quilt and blankets.

They said, jestingly, that " St. Elm's fire had shown itself in the eyes of the little one, and that they were the twin-stars which bring good-luck to the sea-farer."

—p. 215.

This is the St. Helme, St. Nicholas, St. Clare, or St. Helene of the French, the Helmo, or Corpo Santo of the Italians, and the San Elmo of the Spaniards. It is a meteor which at sea cleaves to various parts of a vessel, sometimes as one, sometimes as two, three or even four balls of fire; one ball, which portends ill luck to seamen, is called Helena; two or more, Tyn-daridæ, and they are supposed to be the forerunners of a calm, and in this form they are rarely seen till the storm is well nigh over. But the twin-stars, from which these meteors have borrowed their name, have the same attributes.

“ ——— Quorum simul alba nautis

Stella refulsit

Defluit saxis agitatus humor

Concidunt venti fugiuntque nubes

Et minax, quòd sic voluere, ponto

Unda recumbit.

HOR. CARN. Lib. i. od. 12.

END OF VOL. I.

**THE
OUTCASTS.**

A ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

GEORGE SOANE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE OUTCASTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE more fruitful any period is in events, the more it is extended in the recollection. The Duchess thought she had lived through an age, when, after a few days she landed on the Flemish coast and looked back to England, as if in a dream. There, where a grey line bounded the sea and the misty atmosphere was dim with pale clouds, there lay the cradle of her earliest feelings. And was it possible? and had she left every thing, and did she stand alone on a foreign shore, where none knew her language, none knew the home of her youth; where words and looks fell back on the overburthened heart, unintelligible

to all, and not a single breast met hers with kindred feelings? Overpowered by unutterable and inward despair, she exclaimed, "Oh, happy ye who weep with your own countrymen, who suffer with them and can console them! You know not what it is to be an outcast amongst strangers! Only death threatens you; but we, poor exiles, have before us an endless wandering, an inward decay, a life torn a thousand-fold by all the tortures of unsatisfied desires!"

It was thus that prophetic bodings of evil greeted the Duchess, like servants in a mourning garb before the house of death. Anxiously she landed on the strange ground, and no less anxiously did she inquire on all sides after Sir Richard, describing his figure, his carriage, and his manners; but no one could give her the desired information. The most she could learn was, from a third or fourth hand, of a handsome young Englishman, with dark eyes and melancholy look, who used to be ever on the shore impatiently watching the arrival of each ship,

and afterwards returning home still more melancholy. They added, that he had many months since travelled into the interior of the country. More was unnecessary to send off the Duchess in the same direction; thenceforward she allowed herself no rest, and in a short time she reached Zant. Sarah, unable to master her inward vexation any longer, asked, "How much farther are we to run about the world, seeking for one who could much more easily find his way to us than we to him?"

"You go with me, I think," replied the Duchess drily; "but if you wish to stay behind, it only rests with yourself. At all events, I am resolved to decide for myself without restraint."

"Your Grace is angry," exclaimed Sarah in alarm; "Oh, Heavens! I see it now; my last stay on this earth is breaking under me. If any one had told me this when I left Barbican, and would not listen to my friends or relations, nor suffer myself to be kept back, because,—"
here, for the moment, she could go no farther;

at last she sobbed,—“ Because,—because,—I loved my poor mistress too dearly.—And now,—but that is the reward which awaits the unlucky fidelity of servants.”

“ Be not ungrateful,” replied the Duchess, in emotion. “ I do not misconceive your sentiments ; but moderate a zeal which makes you too presuming. You cannot forgive me,” she added, with a smile, “ that you no longer serve the Duchess of Suffolk ; believe me, that is the source of all your ill-will to my husband. But although I see so much, it does not the less vex me that you are unjust. Let me, for the future, find you more equitable, and don’t let me again hear any such words, which burthen my heart more than they can lighten yours.”

Sarah was silent ; her mistress had her own way ; and soon afterwards, owing to the zeal of Partridge, they found refuge in a decent house. The Duchess took possession of two little rooms, in which she made herself as comfortable as space and circumstances would allow. Rosa-

mond smiled as cheerfully on the banks of the Rhine as on those of the Thames ; she alone was able to quicken the dejected heart of her protectress, who, weak and exhausted, saw a limit put to the continuance of her restless wandering, and, between increasing inability and decreasing hope of finding Sir Richard's abode, led a comfortless life within foreign walls.

Many days had thus past in grief and solitude. The Duchess was sitting at the gabel-window of the Belgian house, with its pointed ornaments, such as we now see them in the pictures of that period. It was a clear winter-day; the sun illumined the Rhine, and its broken beams glided sparkingly over the waves, whilst the barks floated tranquilly up and down at a short distance from the shore. One would have fancied that it was already spring. Rosamond held her hands towards the warm, shining glass, and tapping on it with her little fingers, seemed as if she were plucking the dancing beams, and playing with them, as though they were flowers.

“ Dear creature!” exclaimed the Duchess, “ your joy penetrates to my heart! Were it not for you, I do think I should die here of grief. So unexpectedly does good often fall to us!” she added, pressing the little one more closely to her, and stifling in her breast the conclusion which probably was a gentle reproach to fate.

Weary of her own thoughts, she followed Rosamond’s cheerful looks, as they travelled over the window, when she suddenly exclaimed, “ Good heavens! what is this written on the window? DRIVEN FROM HERE, TOO! RICHARD BERTIE, THE 12th OF FEBRUARY, 1554. And to-day,” she added, calculating the time with quivering lips, “ is the 16th—and we came here on the 12th! Oh, Richard! Richard!”

So loud was the exclamation, that Sarah hurried into the room with the certainty of finding the object of their long search, but stood opposite her mistress, in surprise, casting looks of doubt and inquiry on all sides.

“ My good girl,” exclaimed the Duchess,

“don’t look so strangely, as if you thought me mad; I do not rave; he is here,—he was here——”

“Was!” echoed Sarah, still in doubt what to make of it all, when the Duchess caught her by the arm and led her to the window.

“Was and Is! There, read, you unbeliever! When was that written? and when did we take this room? Precisely on one and the same day; that you must allow;—or is there any illusion here, too,—any self-deception, you incessant objector?”

“Indeed, your Grace, the most cunning reckoner in England could not deny that the 12th of February must still be the 12th of February, unless it should happen to have a twin-brother, so like, that the two are not to be distinguished.”

“Well, then, if you grant so much, you may see that Sir Richard must have been in this city at the same time with myself, perhaps, too, in the same house, and now, even now,—who

can tell?—If he should be under this very roof—
My good girl,” she added, hurrying on from the mere idea to the firmest conviction—“ My good Sarah, run down stairs; inquire accurately of the landlord, in which room Sir Richard keeps; and when you have learnt it, let me know in a whisper, that no one may hear what we are talking about;—we then steal in upon him, unperceived,—he knows us not,—he suspects not ——”

“ I am sorry to disturb your joy,” interrupted Sarah; “ but in good truth there is no one else in the house, except the grumbling alderman, his maid, and the fat cat that keeps up such a devil of a noise before our door every night. I went the other evening through all the rooms when the good man was at the meeting of his colleagues, consulting with them over a bumper for the good of the city; there was not a soul to be seen, nor is it likely that the eccentric grey-beard would endure more than one strange family in his house at the time.”

The Duchess turned from her abruptly, saying, with suppressed anger, "Fetch Partridge; he may be luckier than you in finding, and, at all events, will be readier in seeking."

"If he find between these walls more than the three living beings that I mentioned, I will—"

At this moment Ralph entered the room, and cut short her protest, exclaiming, with flashing eyes, "Oh! your Grace, I have just met a man in the gallery of the barton, who, if my overburthened memory does not deceive me, is as little a stranger to you as to me. Gilles, I think, he is called, and he was once in your service."

"Gilles," said the Duchess, scarcely able to restrain her joy; and starting up, she laid the child in Sarah's lap, and raised her folded hands to Partridge, as if to implore him to consider what he said.

"It was indeed, your Grace; none else but Gilles, who passed through the gallery like a shadow, and vanished up a dark flight of stairs that lead to the loft—the tall Gilles, with the

thin cheeks, and dark eyes,—which he purses up so closely as if to see the better—the long hooked chin, and a white mantle over his narrow shoulders. I did not venture to follow him, for he did not look like one who would return a salute too courteously.”

“ My good man,” exclaimed the Duchess, “ perhaps you will do me the favour to go up into the loft, and say a lady of his acquaintance expressly desires to speak with him on a business of importance.”

“ I will not suffer this errand to be taken from me,” said Sarah ; “ I will myself see if the sagacious Ralph—”

“ It would be best,” interrupted the Duchess, “ that I should not trust to any one this matter, which is too much mine for me to divide it with others.”

She had no sooner spoken this, than she flung open the door, and, without waiting for attendance, or troubling herself about her unacquaintance with the house, hurried out to the gallery,

and was soon lost to her servants. Sarah no longer concealed her doubts of the discovery made by Partridge. Vexed as she was at her mistress's first declaration, the importunate stranger was now, more than ever, a thorn in her side, and, without weighing her words, a ceremony indeed which she rarely used, she gave a free vent to her indignation. Ralph, accustomed by matrimony to eruptions of this kind, listened without at all feeling the force of her sarcasms, or, in truth, much caring about the matter; and, when Sarah had stopt from mere exhaustion, very quietly replied, " I can well believe that you look upon me as an intruder in her Grace's suite, and would rather I should roast on a stake in a London, than see me in your neighbourhood. Every one has to make good his own place in the world, and has no particular inclination to move aside that a stranger may divide it with him. But, setting this aside, perhaps my trifling services may chance to be necessary to our mis-

dress in a foreign land, where a vacant place is not so easily filled."

"A vacant place!" said Sarah, scornfully; "where will you find such a thing? Or do you imagine, Master Partridge, that I shall give up the field to you? And have you any inclination to make good your dexterity as a lady's maid with her Grace?—to curl her hair, arrange her veil, put on her mantle, and, above all, to do the office of a nurse to the little one?"

"It may come to that too, Sarah, if you should fall ill, and the burthen of all such duties, as well as those of the rascal, George, may rest on my shoulders."

"The rascal George!" said Sarah, offended. "Master Partridge would do well to choose his epithets with a little more discretion."

"I shall never find a fitter one for George, my good girl," replied Ralph; "or do you think the cowardly fellow deserves a better epithet, who, in time of danger, gets out of the way, and, in

time of quiet, walks off with his master's treasures?"

Sarah stared at him with uncertain looks, and was able to say no more than "George gone off with her Grace's treasures?"

"I have said it," replied Ralph, coolly; "and you ought to believe that I would not be a slanderer at the expense of any Christian. It is certain that the casket, of walnut-wood, inlaid with steel and yellow metal flowers, is gone, and George too."

"Then we are beggars!" sighed Sarah, half aloud, and sank exhausted on the nearest seat.—
"Beggars, Master Partridge; for, with the exception of a few trifling ornaments, her Grace kept all her gold and valuables in that casket, which she trusted, without any consideration, to one whom she could not but believe faithful. A nursling of Barbican—a vassal of Suffolk, grown to manhood in his service, and so often proved! Heavens! what a bitter drop in the cup of her transport! But I hear her calling out

my name in her joy, impatient for me to hear and share it with her. I tremble at her approach, and dread how she may take my hesitation and confusion."

"Courage, courage!" whispered Partridge in the Abigail's ear as the door opened, and Catherine entered with Bertie, beaming with delight. "For Heaven's sake," he added softly, "none of these miserable faces, which would lead any one to guess some Job's comfort beforehand. Your noble folks never like to be disturbed in their feelings, and would sooner forgive the theft itself, than the news of it at an unseasonable hour."

"What now?" cried the Duchess, stopping at the door in wonder. "Why are you whispering there so mysteriously together? there is nothing more to be discovered. Here is the pleasant riddle that you were hunting after, Partridge," she added with a smile, laying her hand tenderly upon Sir Richard's shoulder. Ralph bowed in respectful silence to give his new

master a favourable idea of his manners, and the Duchess went on to her confidante, patting her pale cheeks,—“ And you, my good girl ; are you angry with me for being in the right ? ”

Instead of answering, Sarah seized her hand with a convulsive effort, and pressed it to her lips, while she burst into a flood of tears.

“ For Heaven’s sake ! ” exclaimed the Duchess in the greatest consternation, “ what has happened ? Some misfortune threatens us !—But speak, Sarah, I conjure you ! Do not torture me in this way.”

“ Fear,” said Partridge, taking up the word anxiously, and endeavouring to give a light unimportant colouring to the transaction, “ Fear has lamed her tongue, for the young George, your Grace’s valet, was her particular favourite, and she is therefore hurt at his returning to England without her knowledge, and indeed without informing any one.”

“ George ?—To England ?—And—”

“ Yes, AND,” said Sarah. “ I comprehend

what should follow this AND, your Grace. May the villain go to the bottom of the sea with his plunder, and be as miserable as he has made us. Nay, let me go on, Ralph," she continued impatiently, as the latter gave her to understand by signs she ought still to conceal the secret from her mistress ; " I cannot bear to see any one laughing in their dreams, when tears await their waking."

"Tears!" exclaimed the Duchess, with a slight emotion of displeasure ; " we'll reserve those for more important occasions. That, which weighs down mean souls, shall, I think, only exalt ours the more. It is, indeed, true, there is not much left for our support after the loss of the casket ; but nevertheless, I can assure you for the next week, and as time comes means may come."

But on Bertie's brow lay a cloud of sorrow, which neither the unexpected sight of Catherine, nor the vigour and cheerfulness of her spirit, were able to dispel. The weight of banishment lay heavy upon him, and he in vain struggled

against it. It was with him as with a plant, that, torn from its native soil, droops under a foreign sky and the altered influence of air and climate, and poorly maintains an artificial existence ; he might live and breathe, talk and laugh, but the violent rending from the bonds of mental habits, of thoughts, and feelings, had left behind in his breast an incurable wound, from which he suffered the more in proportion as he was ashamed of it and endeavoured its concealment. The circumstance, besides, of his finding himself so destitute of all means to meet the convulsions of a troubled time ; the idea of seeing his wife contend with cares that were too strange even to have a place in her fancy ; the increase of domestic burthens in the little foundling, the sight of the child itself, he could not deny it,—all together created a melancholy and painful feeling, which broke up the quiet of his life.

Catherine observed him with silent earnestness ; not a single movement of his soul escaped

her, yet she carefully avoided touching on the doubtful ground. She thought to herself, that which is not sufficiently mature or sufficiently vigorous to raise itself above the storm, let it rest shapeless in the abyss which buries as many feelings as it engenders. At the same time she was unceasingly occupied in endeavouring by cheerfulness to reconcile her husband with the present, while the budding spring, the bright sun, the royal Rhine, all made her rejoice that it was precisely here they had found a hospitable home.

The first days passed amidst their mutual narrations, in a sort of intoxication of the fancy, which, constantly working on fresh materials, leaves not a moment for repose. What Catherine had to tell of her last weeks in England, her flight, and the adventures on her journey, might well be sufficient to divert Richard's thoughts from himself to the happiness of his re-union with his beloved wife. In truth, he was deeply sensible of his happiness, and full

of gratitude to God, who, as he said, might have made him feel much more wretched than he had done in this foreign land ; but that sweet sporting with grief, that melancholy longing after the lost, had absolutely become with him a second nature ; they encouraged his inclination to a pensive apathy, and flattered that feeling in proportion as they justified his dissatisfaction with the world and fate.

In this disposition, which hangs like lead on the activity of man, and takes away all vigour from his mind, it happened a few days after their re-union that Catherine persuaded her husband to a short excursion on the Rhine. Both were allured by the mild influence of the waters and the warm March air, and, forgetful of the place and hour, continued rowing up and down till late in the evening. At last the approach of night made the Duchess anxious, and with a feeling of alarm, for which she could give herself no reason, she urged and hurried on the boatman to make for the land. In her dis-

quiet she promised the man a handsome gratification, without reflecting how little money she had left. When, therefore, they had reached the shore, and he stood beside her with open hands, expecting his reward, it was not without a blush that she felt in the little leathern purse, which she wore at her girdle, and drew thence a two-penny piece, observing, with a beating heart, that a single guinea made up the whole of her possessions ; while the boatman, seeing the gold, and contrasting it with his paltry present, uttered a hearty curse. She hurried on to avoid his abuse, and, that Sir Richard might not see it, hastened along the narrow foot-board to the bank. Here a man offered his hand to help her up to the shore, which she readily took without observing who it was that proffered it, when a voice, close to her ear, said, “ Fly, if your safety is dear to you ; in the boat was the Bishop of Arras, who has long been tracking you, and I am certain that the arrest is made out which delivers you into his hands.”

The Duchess looked round quickly after the speaker, but he drew his head back, and she could discover nothing in the figure which was closely muffled up, but a certain motion of the neck that reminded her of Lord Hastings.

“It must be Hastings!” she said to herself; “all so exactly agrees. His way to Rome leads immediately through Flanders to the papal legate, Reginald de la Pole; and beyond all doubt, the object of his mission brought him in contact with the Bishop of Arras, whose designs against the exiles he might guess without much difficulty. I cannot hesitate! Our die is cast, and we must leave Zant this very night.”

Confirming herself in the resolution thus hastily adopted, she entered the house arm in arm with Sir Richard, and drawing breath for a moment; said to him,—“My friend, we must not allow ourselves too much time for consideration, for hasty measures alone can save us. We have no choice; the danger is rushing upon us with the speed of an arrow; Hastings has informed me of it.”

She now, in few words, discovered to him what had passed; adding, that she would rather hazard every thing than tarry here in uncertainty.

Sir Richard cast a sad despairing look at the helpless condition of the Duchess, and measured in gloomy hopelessness the difficulties of a situation which held out no prospect of safety. Giving way to his fate, he said, "Why should we think of farther flight, when every place exposes us to the self-same dangers? How can we, besides, expect to escape them when we are altogether bound down to the spot which received us in our shipwreck? Whither would you think of flying, Catherine, with your double burthen, the child that you expect, and the child with which you too hastily encumbered yourself?"

The Duchess suppressed the tear in her large bright eye, which she raised triumphantly above her fate, and, with the last guinea in her hand, said with graceful levity; "In truth, dear Richard, if I hold our whole fortune in my hands, at

least we shall go from here with a light foot, and need not fear sinking under the burthen. I fancy indeed no one will be found deficient in strength, whom Heaven has destined to its employment. Courage, therefore, Richard," she added, passing her hand over his sad brow;—"if darkness be there we shall never find our way, but poorly yield to circumstance."

"You are right," said Bertie, suddenly rousing himself from his dejection;—"You are quite right; one way or the other, we defend ourselves against fate and do not fall without a struggle."

The very same hour saw the fugitives set out, Sir Richard at their head, his sword girded to his loins, his hat pressed deeply on his brows, a short cloak on his shoulders, only so much left open that his arms remained free to carry the little Rosamond as often as the Duchess wished to trust her to him. Catherine in a travelling-dress of silk stuff, the colour of which, like that of the velvet facings, was hardly to be

distinguished, looked back from time to time out of her veil and hood on Sarah and Partridge, who had divided the luggage and followed their master and mistress without repining. Gilles was appointed to go before and provide for their accommodation at Wesel, about four miles off, where Bertie had some acquaintances among the Protestants.

The air was uncommonly mild for the time of year, the sky was not so much overcast as to make the darkness an obstacle to the wanderers, and the Duchess walked on with spirit, as soon as she had once got the city behind her, and the open fields offered her a free place of refuge. It was she, too, who always met the sinking spirits and the doubts of her companions with words of encouragement, although she was often obliged to halt and allow a few minutes' rest to over-excited nature. In one of these pauses which became more frequent, the more her strength failed from having been put too much forth at first, they were surprised by a

sudden storm. Heavy masses of cloud driven onwards by the wind, unloaded themselves in pouring showers, against which no shelter was to be found under the leafless trees in the darkness and difficulties of the road. Rosamond cried from wet and cold, and, twining her arms closely about the Duchess, whined so piteously that it went to the hearts of all. The anxiety of the hapless Sir Richard increased into despair, when his wife, almost overpowered with intolerable illness, faltered out that she could go no farther, that her feet refused their service, and all her limbs seemed palsied. And yet it was impossible, in her exhausted state, to suffer her to pass the night in the open fields, exposed to all the influence of the tempestuous weather. He conjured her only for a few moments to yield unlimited power to the mastery of her spirit, and to command nature as at other times she was wont to command circumstance. He appealed to her magnanimity, to her love for him, to all that an intimate know-

ledge of her lofty, decided character could suggest, entreating her to this victory over herself. Catherine smiled tenderly, and, half borne by Bertie, half supporting herself, she dragged along her failing body inch by inch till they saw the towers of the old fortified town, glimmering in the grey sky of night. Till now, Sir Richard had vainly expected the return of Gilles, who had been commissioned to bring them back news of the accommodations they might expect. Utterly unacquainted with the place and its localities, in a state well-calculated to subdue all presence of mind, chilled by the wind, and wet through with the rain, and not unlike a suspicious troop of vagrants, the family of the Duchess of Suffolk crept up to the over-arched gates of Wesel, and could scarcely feel surprised when the guard hesitated to let them in, though Bertie, according to his first intention, carried with him his letters of recommendation from England, which he now produced. There was some apparent justice in distrusting such an

incongruous appearance for a husband of the Duchess of Suffolk, who, on the point of laying claim to a great inheritance in Spain, showed himself in his dress and manner of travelling like the meanest inhabitant of Belgium, and dragged after him a suite more calculated to justify the suspicion of forbidden intercourse, than the belief of a noble alliance. Sunk too as the spirits of the Duchess were, she could not conceal from herself that the figures she saw in the lamp-light gliding along the wall were as little like the proud, bold, Sir Richard Bertie, as the beautiful god-daughter of Catherine of Arragon, of whom the nobles of the court had been so vainly emulous. With bending neck, the hat flapping down, the feathers drooping loosely over the disordered hair, instead of a cloak, dangling rags, a crying child in his arms, his long sword at his side, and a bundle of wet clothes and linen in his hand,—such was the wretched figure of Sir Richard as he crept up to the guard and contested their

degrading doubts of the truth of his assertions.

The Duchess followed him with trembling when at last a free admission was allowed them, but still they dragged themselves from door to door, vainly entreating an asylum, and tortured to despair by pains and wants of every kind.

“ I can go no farther,” now sighed the Duchess, sinking almost senseless on the steps of a church, and, convulsively clinging to its pillars, she prayed for something warm to drink. Bertie flung himself beside her quite distracted, exclaiming,—“ Could I refresh you with my heart’s blood, my dearest creature, we should both have what we want, for upon this earth there is no longer any happiness for me. Oh, why, why must I involve you in my misery?”

“ Go, my good Sir,” entreated Sarah, interfering ; “ pray go, and try to procure some sort of help for her Grace. I fear her time is come, and our cares may very possibly be increased by

a tender being that we must not expose to the raw night-air."

At these words Sir Richard sprang up from the ground in terror. He gazed doubtfully at the anxious girl, then cast a wild look of agony at his pale wife, and, signing to Partridge, hurried away with the resolution of providing her an asylum though he should break open doors for it.

It was with this view that he had burst from the portico, when Ralph prayed him to pause here but for a moment. "It is impossible," he said, "that you can leave her Grace so unprotected, for think, Sir, how easy it would be for licentious insolence to frighten her to death in this abandoned state. Pray remain behind, Sir Richard, and keep watch lest any one should lay hands upon your property."

Bertie stared at him; the anxiety, which tortured his soul to madness had deprived him of all clearness of understanding. He asked in partial derangement,—“How! I am to stay

here and see her die ? Barbarian ! can you wish that of me ?”

“ Not so, my dear master ; only do not withdraw from the poor lady the comfort of your presence, and let me try how I can flatter the hearts of men, and force from their compassion what mere duty without that warmer ebullition would never grant to us.”

With these words he left the stupified Sir Richard who paced up and down before the church-door with great strides, as if under the restless impulse of the furies ; the only token of recollection he gave was that he grasped at his sword from time to time, which he held fast in his arms, as if this iron companion was the only one that he could entirely trust to.

This distracted state of mind did not, however, prevent his being roused by a conversation in Latin which came to his ear from the recesses of the columns. As our ideas are mostly associated with those threads that run unex-

pectedly through life without end or beginning, so the spirit of the overwhelmed Sir Richard was immediately roused by these strange sounds. Two youths, scholars probably of the college that then existed there, were discussing together a point of the new doctrines, a subject too immediate to the excited outcast, not to penetrate through the cloud of his sorrows. "Professors of the same faith," he thought,—“young, of fiery spirits as it seems, no less accessible to pity than to the summons to deed and counsel, what would not an ardent youth be capable of when it was to prove his newly-won conviction?” He approached them both, therefore, with confidence, and addressed them in that learned language which they had used as the interpreter of their secret views. A hearty greeting followed the first surprise, and words grew upon words, for the young fancy of two swimmers, newly afloat on the stream of time, is easily winged. Nothing

besides comes so home to the human heart, as the unjust afflictions of one who has suffered through those that, independently of this, we are inclined to consider with abhorrence.

After a hasty explanation of his desperate state, which was no less warmly received, Sir Richard returned to his wife with the consoling declaration that "when the danger is greatest hope is the nearest." Catherine, for answer, presented to him a new-born infant carefully wrapt up in cloths and linen, saying, with a faltering voice, — "Let the boy be called Peregrine, for he is a stranger in this rough land."

"A denizen of Heaven here and there," said the gentle voice of an elderly man, who, coming from behind Sir Richard, laid his hand in blessing on the mother and her child. By the uncertain light of the lamp which he held aside to throw a softer light upon the group, Catherine, looked up at the stranger whose voice had awakened a doubtful recollection.

The tall figure of a man, somewhat thin, it is true, but strikingly well-proportioned; the peculiar glance of large brown eyes, overhung by arched brows and an imposing forehead; the fascinating smile; the peculiar fall of light-curved locks; indeed, the whole noble appearance could only belong to ONE, whose name lived too indelibly in Catherine's heart for it not to float in joy upon her lips, at the first look of recognition.—“Clemens Launoi! Dear friend of the unhappy Cranmer,” she cried, lifting up her hands to Heaven; “the God of love and mercy, the mild God of our faith, has sent you to me in this hour. How else but at his impulse should I find you here?”

The ecclesiastic, with his sweet benignant smile, shook her proffered hand warmly, and replied, as he respectfully bent over her; “How delighted I am to see my wishes fulfilled; at last I may hope to offer my services to your Grace, and in some measure to repay that dear obligation

which your kindness conferred upon me during those never-to-be-forgotten days in England. It is true, that the humble roof of a poor Wallonian priest, who it is likely will not be tolerated here much longer, is little calculated to protect such noble guests ; but,——”

“ Oh, forbear, generous Launoi,” interrupted Bertie, tenderly warming his new-born son in his bosom ; “ do not let your modesty underrate the goodness with which you received me. How much am I obliged to those excellent young men who showed me the way to you ! Who else would have interested himself in my distress as you have done ?”

The worthy pastor broke in upon his thanks, saying, “ To alleviate that distress as much as I am able, let us hasten to remove the Duchess from this place. I think that we had best get a chair from the near lecture-room of our young students, and carry her Grace to my dwelling. My heart bleeds to witness this misery, and to

see how her sick limbs, stretched out upon the cold wet stones, are exposed to a deadly freezing. For all the world, let us delay no longer," he added, grasping Bertie's hand ; " but, while I go to get all ready, do you make use of my cloak to cover both child and mother."

As he said this, he unclasped from his shoulders a dark-coloured cloak bordered with fur, and pressed it upon Sir Richard, who was still holding it in dumb gratitude, when the other, full of zeal and sympathy, had hastened up the street with the lamp in his hand spreading a soft glow about him, and by degrees his noble form melted away into the pale outlines of the glimmer.

" A messenger from Heaven," said the Duchess smiling, as Sarah spread the cloak over her, and she stretched herself out comfortably while a mild warmth diffused itself through her veins, and a complete relaxation of all her energies at length closed her weary eyes. A gentle sleep made her for a short time forget all her miseries ;

dreaming of better days, she was soon after conveyed to the humble dwelling of Clemens Launoi, who had taken so lively an interest in her troubles.

CHAPTER III.

“ I SCARCELY recognise you, Gilles !”

Such was the exclamation of Sir Richard a few days afterwards, sharply eying his servant, who stood with pale cheeks and a vacant gaze before him ;—“ You, who used to be the most talkative of your species, now weigh your words, and recall them at the very moment they seem ready to escape you. Tell me, you melancholy fool, what influence it is which squeezes your lungs together so that no intelligible sound can come from you ?”

“ Kill me, Sir,” cried Gilles, with his native vivacity ; “ but do not trouble my conscience more than circumstances have already done.”

His face was strangely convulsed, and he dashed himself at Sir Richard’s feet as he uttered these words, in such wild broken tones that his master started back involuntarily and laid his hand

upon his sword ; but, in the same moment, laughing at his own precipitation, he said, with a careless motion of his head, “ Stand up, Gilles, and leave these ravings, they make fools of us both ; this farce means, at the bottom, no more than that you have been passing your time in taverns looking too deeply into the goblets, and in them have forgotten your mistress and my orders.”

Gilles looked up with a gloomy distracted gaze without giving any answer. Sir Richard knew not well what to make of him ; and contented himself, therefore, in saying with a sort of half laugh, that “ he might go and sleep off the remainder of his intoxication.” A transient colour passed over Gilles’ face, and he made an angry motion towards the door, but, as if he had suddenly thought better of it, he turned round, and looking doubtfully at his master for a moment, burst out into a loud laugh ;—“ The devil take these priests, they make a fool of me !”

“Are you mad, Gilles,” cried Bertie, now really disquieted at the man’s strange unconnected manners.

“No,” replied the other, “but I might be if I were to stay much longer in this place. And do you, Sir, leave the town without delay; you have not much time for consideration, for, by Heaven,—” he hesitated; for a moment the words seemed to cleave to his lips; at last he said in great emotion; “I am not rascal enough to betray you, but the Bishop of Arras has spies every where, and the house of the noted Clemens Launoi is not a secure refuge for those who are false to the bosom of the church.”

“The Bishop of Arras! What should he do here in Wesel? And how have you got to the knowledge of him?”

“What SHOULD he do here?” replied Gilles; “rather ask what he WOULD do here. His arm is long, and links itself with other arms that

form a chain, from which no one will easily free himself who is once fettered by it."

"You speak very confidently, sirrah," exclaimed Bertie, no longer master of his vexation at the perpetual contradictions of his fate. "You seem to me in the secret, and are perhaps even a tool of those mysterious plans of which you know and talk too much not to be involved in them."

"Hum!" replied Gilles, gloomily; "do not you, Sir, draw the knot faster; the noose is only just tied, and I have my neck still at liberty; but Anthony Perrot, Bishop of Arras, the former patron of Gilles Boisy, like him a native of Besançon, the protector of his church, the benefactor to his family, the favourite of Philip of Spain, and through him involved in the religious disputes of England—this most dangerous enemy to all the Protestants—might easily find means to puzzle the conscience of a poor fool, upon whose integrity your safety depends."

“Declare yourself more plainly,” said Bertie, with assumed composure, “if you would have me attach any importance to your words.”

“You had better trust me, and leave alone all explanation, which, in the end, will only tell you what you may easily guess for yourself. Do you remember who was in the boat at Zant, and what warning drove her Grace from there? Your steps were not unwatched, and you only escaped the peril of seizure from their having secured me, as they thought, in a friendly way, and made themselves masters of my brains by all those means which, to save souls, drive souls into hell-fires. I have been allowed to follow you because I promised to pursue you.”

“How? You had not then left Zant before us?”

“I have come thence but to-day, and repeat my counsel,—fly from here before it is too late.”

“Fly? Whither? and by what means? Besides, when the Duchess has had so few days

of rest, who would wish that she should, in her state, ——”

“ No state can occasion her greater disquiet than that in which circumstances have placed her here. Trust me, not a moment is to be lost.”

“ Would you kill her? I very believe all the devils, that follow us, have got into your body. But go, sirrah, and leave me to take care of my own family.”

Gilles bowed in silent emotion, resolved at first to abandon the obstinate Sir Richard to his fate; but his fidelity conquered all other feelings, and he said, when half beyond the door, “ Give wings to your fear, and fetter your suspicion, or you fall else into the snare which the evil one has laid for you.”—And with these words he left the room. Bertie looked after him in doubt. For a time he walked up and down with quick steps, but, the more he considered every thing, the more his uncertainty

increased. Scarcely had the generous hospitality of Clemens Launoi assured an asylum to the poor Catherine; scarcely had she recovered from her sufferings, and the first pressing necessities of the family were silenced, than the most adverse circumstances again threw her out into the wastes of life. "Impossible! impossible!" he repeated frequently to himself, as his excited fancy brought before him more and more urgently the threatening images of the future. "How!" he exclaimed, as if turning in defiance against fate itself—"Are the wretched exiles again to crawl over moor and heath, imploring for admission at miserable hovels, and learning to beg in a foreign language for the most common necessities of life? Never! Never!"

A quick, violent knocking at the street-door suddenly dispersed all these images, leaving but a single feeling, which stood before him like a spectre.—"If it should be true!—perhaps already!—Catherine!"

He stood as if rooted to the spot, all his ideas mingling together in confusion. In the meantime there was evidently something going forward: the hasty footing of men was heard on the stairs; Launoi's study-door was opened, and Sir Richard could distinguish many voices speaking at the same time. It thrilled like ice through his veins, nor had he courage to move from the spot, for the dread of being forced to hear the worst unconsciously lamed his energies. He stood and stared without motion at the door, and thought confusedly—"Now, now they are coming; but first they have to grapple with me, and they shall tear me in pieces before they lay a finger on her."

Was it the last words that went like a sharp knife through his breast! or was it the alarmed spirit that roused him from his stupefaction? Enough,—he suddenly collected himself, and burst into his friend's study, without considering whom he might find there. His wild eye, and the deadly paleness of his distorted features,

lent something so startling to the hurry and vehemence of his entrance, that the by-standers drew back in terror. Clemens Launoi, however, went up to him with an open letter, that he had just been attentively reading, took him gently by the hand, and, master as he was of his feelings in every circumstance of life, composedly said, "It is not for your own fate you are concerned, but for that of the friends you have left behind?"

Richard looked at him doubtfully, and asked, in an absent manner, "The friends left behind? where should I have such? I have heard of nothing."

"I mean," replied Launoi, "the affecting news from England."

"From England is it?—Nothing, then, that has past here,—here in this house?—Nothing concerning the Duchess," he added, in a faint and anxious voice.

"She sleeps between the two little angels," replied Clemens, smiling in deep emotion;—

“and by all means let her continue to sleep. We have come to a crisis which no one could have dreamt of. Thank Heaven for its mercy in having snatched you from the fiery whirlpool that has swallowed up the first and best of your native land.”

“So!” exclaimed Bertie, dwelling on the word, and as if in a dream still.

“Yes; the Bishops Hooper and Rogers opened the list of martyrs; Taylor and Saunders followed; in a short time after, Latimer and Ridley; and,——”

“And who?” cried Bertie, anxiously. “Not Cranmer? For Heaven’s sake, say, no!”

“I must not deceive you,” said Launoi, with difficulty restraining his tears; “the dreadful blow has fallen; but spare me the melancholy details which would harrow up the heart of the most indifferent. Philip’s arrival in England has been immortalized with a festival-fire that will burn on unquenchably in the recollections of men.”

“ All England is in flames,” cried a younger man, in whom Sir Richard recognised one of the two students, to whom he owed Launoi’s assistance;—“ All England;—and shortly the Inquisition will demand its daily victims there, as it already does in the Netherlands. Where now shall silent conviction and freedom of conscience find a home on earth? Germany is divided in itself, and that which should unite minds in concord, religion, scatters around the incitements to hatred and persecution.”

“ It is so, and is not to be altered,” said Launoi, pacing up and down the room with great strides, with his head drooping to one side, and holding the letter, which contained the sad intelligence, in his hands crossed behind his back.—“ Something,” he added, thoughtfully, “ there must always be to create strife and opposition amongst men; for what should we be if life stood still?”

He himself stood still here, looked at all present with his keen, piercing eyes, and then

added—"He, who takes up a decided feeling, must be ever ready in its defence. If all went one road, what room would there be for choice? If you are grieved, then let every thing take its own course. Curious enough, that you should give yourselves out as champions, and should be surprised that your adversaries have hands; but keep your heads and your hearts free, and fear not to address you to the task when the time for it is come."

"Good," replied the youth, "if it were a fair contest, but the enemy lurks behind us with poisoned arrows."

"God forbid! The war is openly declared: Bad indeed, if it were carried on by underhand means notwithstanding. The Christian world is fairly divided into two parties; that is a thing not to be altered. Forward, therefore, that we may meet again, and as to what may be risked by so doing, it must not come into the account."

"What do you think of doing, noble Lau-ni?" asked the other of the two students.

“ That cannot be so well decided at the moment,” replied the priest ; “ it must be left to take its course.”

On saying this he relapsed into his wonted thoughtful silence ; and his pupils, not wishing to disturb him, left the room softly, without calling any farther upon his attention.

Bertie had not long been alone with his host, when the latter stood before his friend, and laying his hand frankly upon his shoulder with an expression of warm sympathy, said, “ Cranmer’s unexpected death has made a deep impression on you ; retain that impression firmly, for we cannot let the important accidents of life fasten too strongly on our minds. An important fate more frequently confounds than fills the imagination ; and, to get rid of the unpleasant turmoil, we turn away with the exclamation of ‘ horrible !’ instead of dwelling with respectful meditation on that wherein Heaven has openly manifested its power.”

Sir Richard's heart was bound with unutterable pain, but the words of Launoi loosened the bond, and a stream of tears gushed from his eyes. He clasped the hand of the amiable priest in his own, without being able to utter a word for a time ; and at length said, with impatient vehemence, " After all, the noble and the high-minded are here on earth only that they may leave behind in their sudden disappearance regret for their loss, and pain at the unattainableness of all human wishes."

" If," replied Clemens, with a gentle smile, " I were not to interpret your words quite so closely as at this moment you intend them, I should not be inclined to contradict your proposition in the main. The highest was given to us, and again takes from us, merely to keep awake that aspiration which alone urges us forward with irresistible power. How can we wonder that a vision should not be a perpetuity ? That which *comes* must go again ; such is the order of things."

"That which comes must go again!" cried Bertie in deep emotion; "I also must go,—must go hence. The hand of Heaven lies heavy on me; restlessly it drives me and mine from place to place. How have we sinned, that we are exposed to such a punishment?"

"We are all born in the flesh," replied Lau-noi thoughtfully. "Who is here exempt from probation? You have eaten of the apple of knowledge, and the fruit grows under your hands. It satisfies none, but he who has once tasted, ceases not to eat of it. Is it strange, then that good and evil should affect your soul so keenly?"

"Yes, keenly indeed!" exclaimed Bertie, who was now incapable of feeling any thing but the unspeakable oppression of the moment. The chaos of impressions, which rushed in upon him from all sides, defeated his powers of thinking, and he stared fixedly before him, and in vain sought for a beam of light in this darkness. Lau-noi watched him attentively; he felt

that this sickly disposition should be spared, and yet minute was linked to minute, and with their weight dragged on the unfortunate ones into the infinite succession of events. He, however, cautiously observed, " I think, dear Sir, you were quite right in what you said of quitting this town. Since Spain and England have joined hands across the sea, you are as little safe here as I shall shortly be, for the Netherlands are swallowed up in the destructive union ; the Infant has founded his kingdom there, and Anthony Perenot, Bishop of Arras, is in alliance with the bishops of London and Winchester ; the German prelates every where aid his zeal, and a concealed fire undermines the whole land. At the same time my way is not as yours, for I am going without delay to the seat of war. In Tournay I have long been expected ; the community of Protestants there need me, and I cannot hesitate to accept their invitation, but you cannot and must not follow me ; besides, I am not in that pressing hurry which

you are. And now, without at all wishing to inquire into your secrets, I must yet warn you of one circumstance which demands the greatest caution : there is a vague report, in England, of a child stolen or carried off, which they are every where tracking, and which, from the Bishop of Chichester's information, they believe to be in your lady's hands."

"The unfortunate little creature!" said Bertie unguardedly; "I never could reconcile myself to its being with us."

"Measures are taken to get possession of the innocent object of persecution at all events, and they are such as you will hardly escape without the protection of a stronger arm than mine. Follow, therefore, my advice, and turn yourself to the Elector of the Palatinate, the friendly patron of our church, who will find means to secure you an asylum in his country."

"Why do you so suddenly advise me to flight? and how is it you have learnt the secret proceedings in England and their occasions?"

“Let not that astonish you; my relation to the present makes extensive connexions necessary. I am well informed, and, believe me, speak no idle words and have no secret designs either upon yourself or your honoured Duchess. But try, my dear friend, to break the state of things to her, and persuade her to that which necessity compels her to.”

“How can I,” exclaimed Bertie, in deadly alarm at the mere idea of such an office; “how can I wake her quiet sleep with this word of terror?”

“We will not disturb her as long as she sleeps, but we must catch her looks on waking, and lead things gradually to where they must come at last. Oh, she has a clear head, and will easily unravel the chaos, if she does but undertake it.”

Richard flung himself upon his breast amidst a flood of tears, crying, “Do you take this burthen from me! Heaven has intrusted to you more than one soul, and you understand them

even before they well know themselves. Do not then deny yourself to the prayers of a wretched man, who lies broken and powerless on your breast, and is incapable of giving the death-blow with one hand, while he raises up the falling one with the other."

Launoi pressed him gently in his arms, and kindly replied, "Compose yourself, my poor friend; I go to fulfil your wishes, and do you in the mean time collect your spirits, and meet her with courage on her appearance."

During this, Catherine had awaked, and sat up in bed, with the little Peregrine in her arms, and Rosamond before her propt up with cushions. She looked smilingly from one to the other; her heart was moved with gentle compassion for the little creatures; and, as she considered the scanty clothing of the new-born infant, the worn-out finery of the little Rosa, and her own dress, the gift of strangers' charity, she could not repress her anxiety for the future. The room, besides, in which she slept with Sarah and the

children, was so small, so destitute of all ornament and almost of furniture!—there was so little on which the eye could rest with pleasure, and nothing but immediate necessities of warmth and shelter were satisfied! “ Yet even for this,” she cried in the first ebullitions of gratitude and inward shame, “ even for this, Oh Heaven, praised be your infinite goodness ; we live, and feel that thou art near, and what more can the vain heart desire ?”

Launoi now opened the door softly, to see if the Duchess were awake, who turned her moist eyes towards him, and said, “ Come, dear Sir, and help me to bridle and keep down a temper spoilt by fortune.”

“ How !” replied the pastor, “ have you not enough already in the probations allotted to you by Heaven ? Do you wish for others and more severe ?” The Duchess looked at him, first in alarm, and then with a keen glance of inquiry.

“ Your words point to some dark mystery, which you would have kept secret, had I not

unconsciously thrown a light upon it. Yes, *new probations!* I read them in your sad brow.—Gracious Heavens!—Richard!—does that, which you would hide from me, concern him?”

“Heaven be praised, I can say *no* to this, and well for me that the worst, after such a terror, must sound gently to your ears. After all, it is no more than that you must again take into your hand the pilgrim’s staff, and continue your wanderings through this restless life.”

A slight spasm of the muscles of her face, the paleness of her cheeks, and the convulsive embrace of the two children, that followed this declaration, imposed a momentary silence on the compassionate Launoi. But she caught his hand, and, grasping it as strongly as her failing strength would let her, said, while her eyes glittered with tears, “I will not shrink in the trial which God has vouchsafed me, and think not, noble Clemens, that an English heart faints at the sight of danger; I may, as a woman, be terrified, but the cowardly blood subserves a

more potent voice ; it flows back with vigour into the veins, exalting the spirit above the common fate of mortality."

Her cheeks glowed as she spoke. She rose from the cushions, and, although a feverish trembling thrilled through her nerves, yet her voice was firm, and her thoughts and purpose collected, as she added with animation, " Let us not waste many words, for I doubt not the affair asks haste ; you would not else be alone here. Richard would scarcely have trusted such an office to any one, even to you, if he had not dreaded the idea of being forced to urge and hurry me in such a moment. *When*, therefore, and whither are we poor exiles to go, my dear friend ?"

Launoi acquainted her with as much as the circumstances required, without unfolding to her the details. The image, indeed, of multiplied disorders might be painted by a few hasty traits sufficiently to persuade to flight from the seat of riot and persecuting hatred, without any personal considerations.

Supplied with letters to the Elector, and with as much money for their travelling expenses as the narrow means of the generous Clemens could procure, we find the wandering family on the road to Heidelberg. The Duchess, sitting in a chair with the two children, suffered all the pains which over-excitement and exhaustion at the same time could inflict, while her husband rode a miserable hack, on which besides he was forced to take Sarah before him. Gilles and Partridge walked by them, looking attentively to their mistress, and thus they went on till they reached a little village-inn where they intended to pass the night. It was late when they got there, and they asked for nothing but some bread and a couch, both of which their ready money procured them, and they went to sleep without heeding who else might be in the same room with them.

The morning had scarcely dawned when the wakeful Gilles had got every thing ready for their departure. In the hour of need, valet,

groom, and cook at the same time, he contrived to prepare a tolerable breakfast, while Ralph, who was no novice in the tricks of inn-keepers, bargained with his host for their expenses. He was every where employed about their ways and means, and his orderly understanding would suffer nothing doubtful or perplexed, or what, at least, seemed to him to be so. No less ready than fearless, he was quite at home in the darkness, and showed much more penetration than would have been expected from his large red face, his light eyes, and a certain good-humoured look of wonder that had become a habit with him. Nothing, besides, was better calculated to deceive the natural cunning of people, however sharpened by occupation, than Partridge's simple appearance, which had often in former times made his guests believe they were mocking him, while he was imperceptibly leading them to the point where he wished to have them. In the same way he flattered the restless spirit of his wife with the household-management, while he

kept the money all the time in his own hands, and by this means escaped the snares which she assisted in laying for him.

Two more dissimilar beings could not well be brought together in one relation, than the quick apprehensive Gilles and his opposite, Ralph, who seemed there only to let him go on his own way, while he watched his every step with practised eye and not without suspicion. It had not, therefore escaped him when, on the foregoing evening, a man in a grey dress, a cloak of the same colour, and a broad-brimmed hat flapt deeply over his brows, in a very familiar manner beckoned Gilles aside, who whispered with him, and pointed out the children, whereupon the stranger eyed them, though from the darkest corner of the room. In the night moreover,—when Ralph had, indeed, slept and dreamt a great deal,—it seemed to him as if the same man were bending over the infants, and staring at them with such piercing looks, that they awoke with loud cries; and so much was

certain ; a violent screaming of the children did indeed wake the sleepers, but, when they started up, the lamp, either by design or accident, was extinguished, and no one could tell the cause of the disturbance. From this moment Ralph kept awake ; his suspicion now roused, nothing could appease it so long as its companion, curiosity, remained unsatisfied. With eyes half-closed, but constantly fixed on their object, he watched every motion in the room. The stranger, in the grey cloak, sate at the first break of day in his corner before a table on which his arms leant, his forehead pressed upon his hands, and immoveable as if he slept. Gilles now sprung up from the ground, and, shaking off his weariness and the straw of his hard bed, went about getting every thing ready in the kitchen and stable. The grey man suffered his hand to glide from his brow, and a pale face was lifted up, that, for a moment, looked after Gilles, but, in the next instant, he seemed lost in thought, and a short time afterwards he got up from his

place and left the chamber. Partridge crept after him, but he was no where to be found; but as he now stood thoughtfully at the stable-door, he heard Gilles whistling within as he rubbed down Sir Richard's horse.

"I have done him wrong," he murmured to himself; "he is alone." At this moment a horse snorted near him; and he turned round in surprise to the side when the sound came, when the grey man, one foot in the stirrup, and flinging the other with careless grace over his Arabian, passed by him so quickly that he did not recollect himself till the rider was almost out of sight. He then went up to Gilles, and asked, "Who is that gentleman?" Gilles laughed, and asked in answer, "Who is that man with the haversack, who has just gone out of the door, and hurries on so fast? or rather, tell me what that woman has got in her head, who winks to that young girl yonder and looks so mysterious?"

"You are mocking," said Ralph; "but I know," he added, in that quick decisive manner

with which he often confounded others,—“ I know that you spoke with the grey horseman, and are in his confidence ; your looks betrayed so much yesterday on your entrance into the public room.”

“ My looks ! on my entrance into the public room !—Why, I hardly knew that I had eyes when we found ourselves at last safely under cover.—And of what metal are you, friend Ralph, that after such a forced march you could think of any one but yourself ? To wade through these marshes for eight hours together, now called by her Grace, now by Miss Sarah, here to lend a hand, and there to do some other service, and that till late at night.—Zounds ! I may have winked when the lights within burst on my eyes so suddenly ; for I was so moped, and deaf, and blind, that I very likely made fine faces when you fancied you had caught me dealing in secret signs.—Ha ! ha ! my noble expounder of winks and nods, the superabundance of your wisdom has again made a fool of

you. The poor grey horseman! For what do you take him, Master Ralph?—If it should be an emissary of the English conclave, how then? He has recognised you, recognised you at the first glance, for he has often been your guest.—Don't you recollect him?"

"Go to the devil with your jeers," said the other, enraged; "but as sure as my name is Ralph Partridge,—"

"Ralph! Gilles!" cried a voice from within.

"Ha! Sir Richard!" said the volatile Frenchman, and with three steps was in the house.

"I swear I'll find it out," muttered Ralph between his teeth. But he had no longer time to dwell on such thoughts, for the family was ready to set out, and the utmost activity of the two servants was in request. Sarah had a thousand things to remember and to find fault with, and it was by no means easy to please the spoilt Abigail; while her mistress, contented with every thing, quiet, and full of self-denial, looked for-

ward with a cheerful face to a day of anxiety and exertion.

Strange enough, after they had gone a little way, they perceived the grey horseman at a short distance from them slowly pacing up the road. The Duchess, who had not observed him till this morning, and who, attracted by his melancholy manners, the concealment of his face by the low-flapt hat, and the noiseless, ghostlike way of his coming and going, had suffered many fancies to take possession of her, now observed him more attentively. He seemed to remark it and took himself off, but he was soon visible again and continued to be their companion ; so that at every lodging for the night, where he constantly arrived before them, he had all the appearance of belonging to the party, without their having exchanged a syllable, or being allowed by his silence the slightest approximation. Ralph spared no pains to get at the bottom of this mystery ; but the other had a manner about him which, baffling

all hasty experiments, disarmed craft as well as presumption. At last, however, being always on the watch, he succeeded in surprising the stranger, when thrown off his guard, by a sudden burst of emotion ; it was in a turn of the road not far from Heidelberg, which went down a steep precipice that filled the Duchess with terror for the children. The sudden halt, and the vehemence with which she let down the glasses, stretching out her hands through the window as if to implore the aid of her companions, so strongly affected the grey man, that with a hollow groan he spurred on his horse, and made it plunge a few paces forward to the chair ; but, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he drew in the reins, and turning to Partridge, who stood near him, exclaimed.—“ My God ! the Duchess ! —her children ! ” and as Ralph only looked at him in wonder, without making any reply, he suddenly wheeled about and disappeared in a neighbouring thicket.

“ Was it not—Yes ; and yet I know not?—”

But Ralph might reflect as long as he would upon those features, so strange and yet so familiar, he could form them into no fixed and perfect recollection. Meanwhile the Duchess had alighted. In a sort of timid confusion she handed the little Rosa to the nearest person, and, herself carrying Peregrine, took her husband's arm and hurried on to get over the dangerous ground.

After having taken a moment's breath, she called out to her servant, " Sarah ! what have you done with the child ?"—" Here," replied a hollow voice ; " here is the pledge which Heaven trusted to your hands, and which you delivered to mine without observing it. Keep the child as a dear inheritance from—" His voice failed him. With indescribable emotion Catherine took the little one from the arms of the grey man, who had left his horse behind in the thicket, and now stood beside her. She endeavoured to see his face ; he turned away, but in the next moment bent his head close to her's, and whispered a few words into her ear, at

which she seemed to be highly delighted; yet before she could utter a word he had mounted his horse, and galloped off.

“That was no other than Hastings,” she exclaimed confidently, seizing hold of Bertie’s arm, who made a hasty movement of anger, and entreating him to let the horseman go his way without molestation.

Ralph could make out nothing of the conversation that passed between his mistress and her husband, in spite of the nearness into which he had been led by his zeal; yet he thought that he might conclude thus much from what had happened,—namely, that the suspicious grey companion nourished no hostile designs against them, but was rather to be considered as the tutelar spirit of the family. Out of this he spun many a fable, completely entangling himself in their web, without getting a jot nearer to the bottom of the business, when Gilles gently tapped him on the shoulder.

“Master Ralph, do you perceive nothing?

We are gradually getting out of the direction of the high way. This road does not go to Heidelberg. What, I wonder, is the meaning of it ?”

Partridge looked up in surprise and was not a little alarmed, when, going up a narrow path, they approached a wood, the gloom of which had nothing very attractive in a time so fruitful in adventurers and vagabonds.

The Duchess took her place again in the chair, Sir Richard and Sarah preceding her, and the two men following. The mirth of Gilles, increased still more by Partridge’s ill-humour, exhausted itself in jokes at the cost of the latter ; no sooner had they entered the wood before them, than he drew up close to Ralph, and, looking about with pretended terror, said, “ Let us keep together, my friend, for I fear this thick wilderness conceals some owl-faces, that shun the daylight ; we may chance upon more companions than would be agreeable, and make acquaintances that we by no means wish for. If I

mistake not there is something creeping mysteriously amongst those trees, as if it intended to fall upon us from its ambush."

"You may happen to be right," replied Partridge, grasping him by the arm in his usual rough way, and turning him to the opposite side, whence there really did appear two very suspicious figures ; the one, an elderly man, armed with a sword and halberd, of wild exterior, seemed as if he belonged to some band of mercenaries to which he might be conducting the young fellow that hung on his arm, whose fierce appearance announced the vagabond at the first glance. Gilles was not altogether deficient in courage, yet the sight staggered him, and he said, somewhat confused, to Ralph, "The devil, Master Ralph, yours are rough jokes." But scarcely had the last word past his lips when the loud singing of many coarse voices burst upon them from the wood, a signal that was answered in a thundering bass by the old soldier. Upon this

Sir Richard pulled in his horse, and let the chair come up with him that he might be ready to protect the Duchess and keep off these adventurers, Gilles redoubled his speed, and Ralph stopt to break off a very decent sized branch, which he cleared of its twigs as he went on and polished into a formidable weapon of defence. Nor was his labour without its use ; for he was but a few steps from the chair when it was threatened on the side by a whole troop of mercenaries, while Bertie opposed himself to the daring impudence of the two first comers. A more painful situation than that of the Duchess could not well be imagined, with both the children in her lap, shut up in so close a space, stunned by the cries, threats, and execrations of the horrid figures that surrounded her, and following with anxious looks the progress of her husband ; he, who was on one side driven to extremities, and on the other encumbered by the clinging and shrieks of Sarah, at last rushed

desperately amongst the horde, cut down all that opposed him, and yet without seeing any end to his danger.

The unhappy Catherine in the meantime sank upon her knees, and carefully laying the screaming children on the seat of the chair, bent over them, and covered them with her body, while without there incessantly resounded exclamations of "Knock the infernal chest to pieces; drag the woman out and lay hands upon her treasures; they are rich exiles from England and must not go unplucked."

"Unlucky Hastings," sobbed the Duchess; "what way have you directed us? Was it your treachery that has thus driven us on to our destruction? are these the friends that awaited us in the shelter of the forest?"

She scarcely dared to lift up her eyes to the barbarous rout, and was almost deafened by the uproar; still the voice of her husband, his loud authoritative exclamations not to touch the chair, Gilles' broken cries whenever he struggled

against the advance of his opponents, Ralph's hollow bass, not much unlike the tones of a woodman, and all those familiar sounds, which betoken resistance or near defeat, would at times make her look up involuntarily, but only to hide her face again in the cushions at the next fearful yelling of the furious horde.

Love and revenge inspired Bertie, and his sword flashed like lightning over the heads of the adventurers. Many already lay wounded on the ground, but the superiority of numbers was too great, the zeal of rapine was equal to that of despair, and time wore out the strength of the unequal combatants. Sir Richard's horse was bleeding, and if it fell, half the opposition was over; Gilles could scarcely keep his feet, faintly defending himself with his back against the chair, which the bearers did but just manage to balance in the pressure from every side, and the moment was at hand, which threatened to disarm him.

The wood now echoed with the shouts of

exultation; Bertie's horse was fast sinking under him, while Partridge's failing voice only half replied to his cries of desperation, and the Duchess, no longer mistress of herself, stared at the combat without consciousness, when the ill-timed shouts called to the spot a troop of travellers. Several horsemen rushed forward as if on the wings of the wind. The combat began afresh with renewed fury, but as the rest of the party came up, and the advantage of numbers was on Sir Richard's side, fortune soon declared for the latter by the flight of an enemy who was by no means inclined to risk his life in vain.

Towards the end of the fray, a tall man, of commanding appearance, made up to the chair, and, before Bertie could hasten to it, had taken out the swooning Duchess. It required a few minutes only to bring her back to herself. On a gentle declivity, and exposed to the mild current of the air, she soon opened her eyes, and their first glance fell upon the stranger.—“ A-Lasco.”

she cried in astonishment; "You! and were you the friend that expected us here?"

At this moment Bertie rushed up, breathlessly, and embraced Catherine, with unutterable feelings of gratitude and delight at seeing his dearest good on earth thus rescued from so imminent a peril; for her only he had eyes and ears, and scarcely trusted either, when after the first burst of joy, she named their protector and pointed him out where he stood with earnest looks considering the unhappy couple that but a year before he had seen at Castle Barbican in splendour and security. Suppressing his emotions, A-Lasco addressed the Duchess with a gentle voice:

"I am on the way with this little troop to my native land, where the reformation has found a silent refuge. An unfortunate king, of too feeble a temperament, tolerates without directly protecting it, and if you will trust yourself and yours to my guidance, I can promise you they will find a home in Poland. Sigismund

August weeps for his young wife; how then could he deny his sympathy to the fate of a young pair, in such sad extremities?"

He paused here, as if waiting for Catherine's answer, and continued after a short silence,—
"In pursuance of the secret intelligence of unknown friends, I have not only waited to-day for you in this wood, but have already taken preparatory measures for your favourable reception in Poland. The King is informed of your unfortunate circumstances, and, I doubt not, he expects you with impatience."

"Impenetrable destiny!" sighed the Duchess;
"whither is your wild flood driving me?"

She lifted up her eyes and hands to Heaven, and for some minutes remained in this position as if lost in the darkness of existence. By her side stood Bertie, holding her hand in his, while his looks seemed to say, "Delay not, Catherine; our days are numbered; let us save without wavering the few that Heaven may have allotted us." The Duchess turned to him with

an earnest gaze, and rising from the turf on which she lay, exclaimed, "Well ! I am ready!"

She said not another word, but with deep emotion receiving the children from Sarah, took her place in the chair again ; and, from this time forth, continued without any opposition to approach the borders of a land misplaced by her fancy into the regions of fabulous darkness, where the barbarous wilds would rather inspire the soul with horror than with any comfortable hope.

CHAPTER III.

Impute it not a crime
To me or my swift passage, that I slide
O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap.—SHAKESPEARE.

THE tepid airs of spring whispered through the woods of Barbican; its leaves waved like a green sea, while the crimson, morning-clouds were sailing rapidly above it, the harbingers of the bright day, which already darted a thousand glittering rays through the young branches. And soon the cheerful call of the huntsman's horn announced that life was waking to the dawn. Dogs barked, horses champed the bit impatiently, the pawing of their hoofs resounded through the leafy arches, and the voices of men were loud.

Suddenly there appeared from amongst the

green leaves a slim horseman, his falcon on the wrist, galloping merrily in advance of a noble hunting-train that moved on slowly in regular order. The youth's silver-edged mantle, of amaranth-coloured silk, floated lightly to the breeze, and, like those purple rays which precede the sun, shed a brilliant light on the figure which it adorned. Moving the hat a little from his brow, and turning to his companion, in a voice of sportful triumph, he said, "Take care, or I shall be the first to get her salutation!"

"Impetuous boy," replied an elderly man, with a look that betrayed more indulgence than severity—"do not rush into any follies, but think rather of showing yourself before the Queen with that respect which propriety and custom demand. It will not be long now before she comes. Curb, therefore, your forwardness, or it will lead you beyond the place assigned for you."

"My place!" said the other, laughing confidently; "I think, my good Sir, it is not that

behind the fat nag of the castle-chaplain, which you think fitted for me. I tell you I have found a place nowhere, and once, for the jest's sake, will look a little at that by the Queen's side. My uncle Dudley is there often enough, and why should not I?"

"*You are a Dudley,*" replied the other, earnestly—"a race as daring as it is unlucky. Forget not that."

"Why does my father so unmercifully check the spirits of young Essex?" said a deep melodious voice in the train of hunters. "The morning is clear, and why call up the clouds of night?"

He, to whom these words were addressed, considered the young speaker with silent satisfaction. It seemed as if he read in the dark, melancholy eye, that showed almost too gravely under the blue feathers and the diamond agraffe of the velvet hat, something very different from what he had just heard. With a smile he said, "In truth, we do not altogether trust to your

sixteen years' knowing exactly how to husband the good moments of life, or keeping yourself so under curb, as not to go beyond the hour which is yours."

"Ah, Ralph," sighed the youth, with mingled discontent and sadness; "he who is constantly driven along from one step of life to another by the rapid whirl of time and circumstance, naturally struggles after any stay, and catches at what he can. But enough of this: Let us take heed to my father; he is afraid lest any impropriety should offend the delicate feelings of the Queen, for his reverence and gratitude towards her know no bounds. In truth, Elizabeth has few more devoted hearts in England than that of the faithful Sir Richard Bertie."

"And you, Peregrine?" asked Ralph, in a tone of distrust—"Are you less devoted to the great Queen? Is your name the type of your sentiments, and are you really a stranger in your native land?"

A deep blush suffused the youth's face. He

cast a rapid, angry glance at the speaker, and a wrathful answer trembled on his lips, but he restrained himself, and said, "Go on, Ralph; you mean it well, though you misunderstand me."

The old servitor hid his confusion under a cunning laugh, saying, that "Peregrine, in his distant manners and melancholy pride, was as like King Sigismund of Poland, as one drop of water is like another. But," he added, "you were his darling, constantly about him; and one always catches something of our patrons' manners. I shall never, as long as I live, forget you riding to the chase by his side, on your little Lithuanian, assuming as much state as if you were the heir to Poland. Oh, how time goes! How long is it since we have been here in England?"

"What?" exclaimed Peregrine, starting up absently—"How long we have been in England? Yes; truly, good Ralph, I have past but few years in my paternal castle; there has been no end to the continual driving to and fro

and the unsettled life of our family. First, my mother consulted and negotiated about our leaving Poland ; then anxiety for my father urged her to follow him to the Netherlands ; and how much lies between the day when the summons to England's exiles fell into our hands, and the present hour, when we might fancy we had never left it."

At these words he dropt his head with a painful smile, so that the over-hanging feathers shadowed his face,—perhaps to conceal a tear that stole from his eyes. Ralph repeated his " Yes, yes ; how the time flies !" while, with stolen glances, he watched the secret emotions of Peregrine, and then went on in a tone of regret for his lost good cheer—" Those excellent fellows, the Netherlanders ! Gracious Heavens ! there were your cheeses ! and the hot Spanish wines they made prizes of from the Spaniards ! Oh, I shall never forget those days. But still it was well done of your father to take his way thither. He wished a little time to pass

over the new Queen's entrance upon government, and at the seat of war to earn his seat at home. Right! quite right! For with the throne, as at the inn, a man weighs nothing but with the sword in his hand. At Havre and Dieppe he fought like a lion; it was not his fault that both places fell, while the plague swept off the soldiers, and subsequently half London. It brought sorrow enough into your house!—The sweet child! that it should have died so!”

The youth stared at him, as he said this, like one who is thinking of other things, and can give no distinct form to the overwhelming current of ideas.

“The fair Rosa, I mean,” explained Ralph, who thought he had not been understood.

Peregrine shuddered involuntarily; the blood rushed up into his face, he made an aversive motion of the hand to Ralph, and turned away his head, as if it were painful to him to meet the eye of another. At the same time he gave

him his hand, and shook it with a warmth that showed the inward struggles of a mind that vainly endeavoured to master its feelings.

“Peregrine!” cried Sir Richard, beckoning his son to come forward, and he was immediately at his side. The father considered him awhile with friendly earnestness, and said—“Listen, my son; you will see the Queen to-day for the first time; endeavour to please her, for a whole life often depends on the impression of a moment. Subdue your dreaming disposition and those unequal ebullitions of a capricious temper; learn betimes to conceal your feelings, to keep your thoughts sacred to yourself, and train your face to that appearance which is intelligible to the world, for he who assumes a mysterious carriage, is either laughed at or pushed aside. Your beardless chin and clouded brow agree but ill together. What, besides, can the brief experience of a growing youth have, of so sad a nature, that his complaining eye should speak only of lost happi-

ness? Does he set so little value on affectionate parents, a peaceful country, and a mild monarch, that he must for ever weep the loss of a young companion? Go, Peregrine; let me not think that you please yourself with this sentimental part, and put it on for show only, to conceal under it a sluggish imbecility?"

"Father!" exclaimed the youth, glowing up to the eyes; "how could such a thought come into your head?"

"You gave it to me yourself, son; and whatever may seem unnatural in it, ascribe to the dissension in your own mind. Let that be a lesson to you, and chase away the clouds which the sun of a female eye can least endure."

Here he was interrupted by the cry of many voices at the same time, "the Queen! the Queen's train is at hand! The clouds of dust rise thicker and thicker in the direction of Tilbury, where she past the night after the review, and whence she set out early."

“ You may see,” said another, “ the golden buckles and the rich trappings of the horses glittering in the sun-beams ; the rays from them glance down the heights towards the wood, and, before we can get out of it, the Queen will be there.”

“ Don’t let us delay then,” exclaimed Sir Richard, plunging the spurs into his horse’s side ; and, raising his arm to those behind, he cried out, “ Sound, huntsmen ! Let the merry horn echo through these green halls, the wood of Barbican be alive to receive the Queen ! She finds all ready for the hunt as she ordered.”

“ Give way,” said Peregrine, in a commanding tone, breaking through the order of the procession to follow his father. “ By Heavens ! I will not a second time deserve the reproach of sluggishness. The prize of the hunt is mine, or you do not see me again amongst you.”

“ How he flies out,” said Ralph, shaking his head ; “ they should not bait him so ! He re-

strains himself with difficulty, and if he once breaks out, they'll not get him again. Poor fellow! I know well what it is that pinches you; no one knows better; but he's a rascal who would let a word of it pass his lips."

CHAPTER IV.

UPON a green plain, overshadowed by broad-leaved beeches, stood Elizabeth. Before her on the grass lay a white hart, held down by the well-taught dogs, while Peregrine, on his knee, his looks fixed on the earth, presented his hanger to the Queen, that she might end the torments of the poor animal. She took the knife with a courteous smile, and while she caressed Essex's falcon on her hand, said, "Indeed! so young a sportsman, and so expert in the customs of the chase! You must have long followed the vocation; and I would advise you to exchange it for the duties of a soldier."

With these words she signed to Peregrine to rise, and then looked round the circle for Essex, who, expecting this, was immediately at her side. She addressed him in a short quick manner,—“Mark me, friend; the falcon is mine;

it has taken refuge with me, when you carelessly suffered it to fly ; for it seems that the creature is more considerate than yourself."

" More fortunate at least," replied the youth, with a modest smile. " Perhaps your majesty will not so readily pardon me as the falcon, if I venture to say that its flight had only taken the direction of my thoughts, and that the teacher deserves the credit of the lesson which the pupil has executed."

" You are artful and elegant in your justification," said the Queen, laughing ; " that is the language of the Dudleys ; I know it well ; you'll make your fortune in the world, I'll answer for you. But we talk here," she added, turning to Bertie, " and let the Duchess wait for us. The chase is at an end. You, Sir Richard, will, I suppose, conduct me to your castle ; and you, young Essex, may for once play my equerry. Go, and bring my horse hither."

While Essex flew to obey her orders, she stood with her back against a tree, rocking herself to

and fro, and her eyes fixed keenly on Peregrine, as if she sought to unriddle something in his features that she could not understand, and at last said, "I intend to surprise your mother with an unexpected guest; the young Lord Willoughby of Eresby will accompany us to her."

She paused as if expecting Peregrine's answer, but as he only looked at her with open inquiring eyes, she laughed, and added, "Give me your arm, my Lord; and we will hear if the Duchess have any objection to your bearing the name and rank of your grandfather."

"My son!" exclaimed Bertie, catching Peregrine by the hand in the first ebullition of joy—"My son! The remnant of my life is not sufficient to deserve this grace; be you the inheritor of my debt as of my gratitude."

"Enough! enough!" cried the Queen, advancing a few steps in a slight fit of impatience, and with her outstretched hand forbidding all farther thanks. "I am not so disinterested as you may think; I must lay chains upon

you wanderers, or the continent will again tempt you away from our island ; and even if I might trust to approved age, who will answer to me for the wildness of youth ? for by Heavens ! the new lord looks to me as if he were but just now reconciled to his country."

Elizabeth again laughed, as she said this, with the conviction that she had exactly hit upon the truth ; but, to change the conversation to something else, she said with returning gravity, "I can understand, Sir Richard, a young man's desire to offer his arm and sword to the Netherland champions across the water ? But come," she added, mounting a beautiful Andalusian horse, a present from Philip ; "Come, I will tell you the news I have received this morning in my letters from Utrecht."

On saying this she flung herself with ease and dignity into the saddle, and, receiving the reins from the hands of Essex, laughed and said, not without evident signs of satisfaction, "I would wager that you had been instructed by your uncle

Leicester ; it is easy to see by your manner that he has been your model."

Essex bowed with humility, while his wanton eye could not conceal the inward tickling of successful craft and malicious triumph. As he rode at some distance from the Queen by the side of Peregrine, he whispered to him, " Luck to us ! It seems to me that we get on quickly when we know how to keep her company. By my troth she is a woman like all other women, though she carried ten sceptres in her hand instead of a fan. Only see now, I pray you, how carelessly and impetuously she urges the horse into false paces ! My uncle Northumberland was wont to say in reference to her, women ride as they conduct business, wildly, and pressing on to their object without considering what lies in the way betwixt them and the moment. In their quick fancy all resolves itself into one image, and, fortune or misfortune, they give themselves up entirely to either."

Peregrine looked at him in astonishment.—

“ You have attended narrowly to your uncle’s words, and have learnt by heart the catechism of female foibles, as if you were to account for them. But look to yourself; you may blunder notwithstanding such a guide.”

Essex carelessly tossed his handsome head, and Peregrine continued, “ How was that with your falcon? It perched with as much confidence on the Queen’s hand, as if it had been at home there.”

“ The last might well be,” replied Essex, in a manner that left it doubtful whether he spoke in jest or earnest. “ The wise bird has a better memory than Elizabeth. Fancy that the falcon had belonged to her, and that she gave it long ago to my uncle Dudley,—that he, spoilt by better gifts, surrendered it to his importunate nephew, who has this day tried his luck with it,—and then you have the whole mystery of this little stratagem which has occasioned me many friendly words, and, if my good fortune

will have it so, paves me the way to fame and honour."

"How! You had gone through this interlude of the falcon with yourself beforehand, premeditated all, and executed it with purpose? You must have reckoned accurately that——"

"That it would fly to the Queen when I loosed its jesses," interrupted the other. "Yes, indeed, I knew of nothing that would so certainly gain me her attention as this sporting with her fancy. The idea that even irrational creatures are urged to seek protection with her, by a natural instinct, flatters her pride, and ——"

"No more of this; I do not like to hear you pluming yourself on the craft of others. All this came not from your own brain; the few years, that you count more than I do, have never taught you these tricks of stale experience. You are too fiery to reckon in this manner."

“ And you are too monotonous to understand any tune but your own,” replied Essex, laughing.

“ But—” and he pointed to the horsemen who were in advance—“ the train halts, and there is a press about the Queen; something unusual is going forward; we will ——”

“ By no means; my father signs to us to stay behind.”

“ And if Elizabeth herself should forbid me to approach, I would still see what the matter was. I am burning with curiosity.”

With these words he flew over the space like an arrow from the bow, and pulled up behind the Queen, just as the latter bent down from her horse, and addressed, with a sort of half laugh, a black fantastic figure, while the visible emotion of her features betrayed the conflict and anxiety of the mind within. By degrees the looks of all were fixed on the strange group in surprise not unmixt with terror. Elizabeth in green velvet, embroidered with gold, with rich necklaces, clasps of im-

mense value, her royal forehead, hid under a hat, the waving feathers of which at the same time distinguished the sovereign from all others, sate gracefully and boldly on her tall Andalusian, glittering with his trappings, while close at her side, standing by a thin, grey horse, that bent its neck to the earth and with the skeleton of a head kissed the ground, was a little pinched-up figure, in a faded, black silk cloak, that hung in tatters from his shoulders; in his hand he carried a knap-worn hat, fantastically tricked out with mourning flowers, and he looked up laughingly at the Queen, congratulating himself on still finding her alive. "He had long been ill," he added, "and during that time had been much troubled by a bad dream. He was perpetually seeing the Queen upon the scaffold, on the steps of which he fancied himself standing, delivering the black baize, to cover it with." At these words Elizabeth changed colour more than once: She thought of her mother, of the fate of so many

English queens; and though the idiot laugh about the man's distorted mouth, the vacant stare of his dim eyes, and the involuntary twitching of his features, left no doubt as to the real state of his mind, yet she could not help feeling alarmed at this unwelcome reminiscence of the fragility of all earthly grandeur.

"Who are you, poor fool," she asked, not without an audible trembling of her voice.

"Your Majesty should know me," replied the other; "I was with you in the Tower; the handsome Dudley, who is present here,"—and he pointed to Essex—"can witness so much for me. But only think; I saw his head struck off;—yes, faith and troth, I saw the bloody trunk as they carried it past the Queen."

"Away, away with this dreadful idiot!" cried Elizabeth. "How came he here? Who is he? Which amongst you knows him?"

"An please your Majesty, I can tell you all about it," said Ralph, who, during this, had approached the unhappy being with signs of

pity and wonder. "The poor fellow is the child of honest parents, and was well known as a pedlar in the surrounding counties, under the name of Herbert."

"Ralph! What, the deuce, Ralph!" cried the maniac in a shrill voice. "Are you come back again? Have you heard? they burnt your wife, although she did side with the Catholics! Ah, they murder every one here! The poor sweet Jane! They said she was to pass through the wood to-day; but that's false again. Ah, Ralph, the world is bad; it even mocks a poor wretch like me—Shame! Shame! What tricks are these? Here they have been dressing up a strange woman, and want to make me believe it is the Queen of England; go along with you, I am not to be taken in so: Never, never, shall I forget the beautiful Jane! And no other, I swear to you, shall wear England's crown; it is for that I carry a sword."

He made a quick motion with his hand to the side where he thought the weapon was, and,

not finding it, looked up to Ralph with a silly laugh—"Rogue, have you hid it?"

Elizabeth now turned away her horse and rode on quickly with assumed courteousness by the side of Sir Richard, who, passing over the circumstance lightly, pretended not to see the impression it had left upon her. "The fellow," he observed, carelessly, "had always been of a weak brain, according to Ralph's account. He had been forcibly enlisted amongst Northumberland's troops, and a blow on the head, which he had received from one of the guards, on the Duke's apprehension at Cambridge, had completely deranged his senses."

"It is much more probable that he has been touched by Jane Grey's execution," said the Queen. "This lady seems to have made a strong impression upon him: But," she added, with a feeling of self, "there are examples of female eyes having occasioned such mischiefs, and since it appears to be so with him, we will take care that the melancholy fool may

feed in quiet on his fanoies. Essex ! Do you go and show him that you wear your head still, and say that the Queen invites him to London ; let him be escorted thither, and taken into custody. Singular enough that he should recognise the family features of the Dudleys even in this youth."

Infinitely taken with this likeness, she entered the gates of Castle Barbican.

CHAPTER V.

THE long table, at the upper end of which sate the Queen on an exalted state, was set out in the armorial hall of the Lords of Willoughby. Here were seen the arms of the most powerful race in England, carved in stone upon the walls, and amongst them the knights with their shields and mail, so represented as if they stood there actually alive, and ready, as in former times, to draw their swords in all love and duty for faith and honour. Elizabeth, leaning her head upon her hand, looked round well-pleased on the steadfast forms, the pillars of this house, who had served and governed without reproach.

At her side respectfully waited the young Lord, for this time performing the functions of first chamberlain to her Majesty; while the Duchess, with secret pride, watched every move-

ment of her son, whose modest zeal and noble bearing were well suited to the new dignity with which Elizabeth's favour had decorated his blooming youth. Absent and entangled in the flattering ideas of the future, she lent only half an ear to the unwonted life about her. But Sir Richard undertook to entertain the Queen. Since Peregrine had entered into the ranks of his maternal ancestors, they seemed to have become more a-kin to Bertie himself; and with visible satisfaction he recounted to Elizabeth the history of their deeds, or if his memory at all failed, that of his son was prompt to fill up the void. When the name of Suffolk was mentioned the Queen took up the word, and, graciously turning to Catherine, said—"The Suffolks are too nearly allied to the house of Lancaster for me not to know as much of them as yourself. Sir Charles Brandon was a brave man, Duchess, and you have as little occasion to be ashamed of him as I have; but I would for a trifle that the

daughter were of another race. By Heavens, this Francisca is a bad weed, that brings destruction amongst her kin. She has infected the house of Dorset, too. Three brothers she has driven to the scaffold, and even now she does not cease to set the fourth upon us."

"It was a blooming race, that of Dorset," said Lord Burleigh with design. "I remember having seen the mother of all these sons, the Marchioness, officiating as a second god-mother at the christening of your Majesty. She could hardly have supposed at that time, when she implored Heaven's blessing for the new-born daughter of her king, that her son's crimes would stain the holy bond. She was a worthy lady, and deserved to be mother of a happier race. They say that her grand-daughter's death was the occasion of hers too."

"'Tis well," replied Elizabeth. "So she escaped the sight of later and more bloody incidents: yet I thank you, Cecil, for reminding me of that important hour which incorporated

me with the Christian faith. It admonishes us of the frailty of human nature, as of the Divine mercy. We are sinners, all. Let the last of the Dorsets live, however great his offences have been against myself. I think," she added, laying her hand carelessly upon Catherine's shoulder, "the right of the Suffolks to England's throne will be best refuted by royal magnanimity."

"The Suffolks," replied the Duchess, and not without pride, "bear too much of the royal blood in their veins to mistake its superior nature, even there where it has disarmed them."

Elizabeth examined her with a keen but momentary gaze, and then suffered the conversation to turn upon other subjects;—and it was only after a short time that she asked, somewhat pointedly, "Is it long since you have seen your daughter?" but, without waiting for the answer, she added, "I heard something of her lately, though I can not recollect precisely what

it was. Help me out, Cecil; did they not talk of some mis-alliance of the Duchess of Suffolk?"

"May it please your Majesty, there is a report abroad, that the niece of Henry the Eighth has secretly concluded a marriage with her equerry."

The Queen bit her lips in anger, and a general silence at the table gave it plainly to be understood, that every one felt a double meaning in Burleigh's speech. Some whispered to each other a few indistinct words, while Essex, in his thoughtless way, softly said to an elderly man—"it was doubtful which wounded the Queen most in this two-edged thrust,—the reference to that dreaded relationship with the Suffolks, or to her own connexion with Leicester, who was also her equerry and favoured in secret." The experienced courtier shook his head at this bold declaration of the youth's, without letting his face betray any share in such remarks.

It was perhaps fortunate for the harmony of the day, that this momentary excitation was

interrupted by the arrival of a courier with a packet for the Queen ; she broke the seal hastily, and read though its contents with great attention ; immediately upon which she folded the papers together in a hurried manner, exclaiming, “ By my life, important news !—Duchess, your old persecutor, the Bishop of Arras, spoke a true word when on hearing of the execution of the nobles in the Netherlands, he asked anxiously, ‘ but have they got rid of THE SILENT ONE ? ’ and receiving an answer in the negative, coolly said, ‘ Then they have done nothing.’ This SILENT ONE, the restless William of Orange, has driven the Spaniards from the north of Holland ; Zeeland, Guelders, and Over-yssel are free, and have openly avowed themselves of the Protestant faith. I told you this morning, Sir Richard, that Duke Alba miscalculated in moving me to close the English ports against the houseless Netherlanders. It is true in deed, that thence they might have done great damage to the Spaniards with their shipping,

but the consequence of my compliance has not been less prejudicial to his country. The fugitives established themselves on the island of Briel; Fliessingen submitted to them, and a naval power is formed which may assist Nassau and Orange, and with their united forces easily put an end to the Spanish rule there."

Elizabeth spoke this rapidly upon the impulse of feeling, and was silent for several minutes in deep thought, perhaps to observe the impression the news might make on those who were present. She then resumed with calm earnestness; "Here religion must supersede all other considerations; or truly, if we did not recognise in William an instrument of Heaven, this deed would make him a rebel. The interests of church and state are here strangely mingled; it is not always easy to keep our sight and judgment without bias on such occasions."

"It seems to me," replied Secretary Walsingham, "that the brave prince, even in a worldly

point of view, must be acquitted of the charge of rebellion. A German prince, of the House of Nassau, a French vassal by his dukedom of Orange, he acknowledges but in a partial manner the superiority of Spain. As the friendship of the great Charles fettered him to that country, so the hatred of Philip has driven him beyond his limits. He sees life, freedom, and, what is of more importance than either, the purity of his faith in danger, and resolves to dedicate to Heaven a kingdom that he has forced from human tyranny."

"It is, however, a dangerous thing to yield the upperhand to *opinion*," said Burleigh. "If he once goes armed amongst the multitude, he soon, from a servant of Heaven, becomes an impudent innovator, mocking all discipline and order, overturning thrones, and seducing less conscientious monarchs to a breach of trust and their own degradation. Can we overlook that Catholic France supports the heretic against

the brothers of his own belief? Who does not know that Nassau and Orange levy troops against Spain with French gold?"

Elizabeth, who wished to appear not to have heard these words, sided with Walsingham, as, turning to him, she said; "You are perfectly right; the Duke is descended of a line of German princes: the father was a Count of Nassau, the mother a Stolberg. At Dillenburg he was educated in the Protestant persuasion. You saw him, Sir Richard, did you not?" she added, addressing herself to Bertie.

Sir Richard replied in the affirmative, and observed; "I have never met any one who produced upon me such mixed impressions. The calm repose of his exterior, his unembarrassed decisiveness of tone and manner that are ever unforced and natural, yet, not for a moment betraying his real thoughts—these form a strange contrast with that involuntary life-breath of the inward nature, that something which constitutes the spiritual atmosphere of man,

in which the soul's antitype floats colourless in transient outlines. It is not to be comprehended in words, but the feeling has it without knowing it."

"And do you, in this case," said Elizabeth, "call the exterior appearances at variance with the real man? It seems to me that both only give the perfect idea of a lofty and collected spirit. The Prince has no views that he endeavours to conceal by little artifices; he has *one* object for which he would live or die. Thus, at peace with himself, what should disturb the unaffected security of his manners? People often hold that conduct for dissimulation which is only collected and resolved."

"The Prince," said Burleigh, "has learnt in the school of fortune, as of misfortune, to be strictly impenetrable to the eyes of others. It is said of him, that when a boy at Charles' court, he was allowed to be in the room at the audience of foreign ambassadors, and, there, under the mask of childish simplicity,

made remarks with which in after times he surprised his protector."

"Not altogether so," replied the Duchess. "With the great Charles, as with the Prince, people attribute that to design which might only have originated in chance. William is of a silent nature; it is not in his disposition to open himself to every one: Heaven has so constituted him; but we collect confused ideas from a book imperfectly understood. I know the Prince in his domestic relations, in the circle of his family, at the table of his friends, and believe me he has a warm heart, and no head is more brightly inspired by the wine than his. He enjoys it with pleasure and with freedom. But, the fact is, we consider great stars for the most part singly; we do not measure them in their relation to the whole, and therefore to us they are nothing but lights and not worlds."

Peregrine cast a tender look of surprise at his mother, and in his expressive eyes might be

read,—“None understand the depths of the heart as you do.”

“You speak my sentiments,” said the Queen, and rising from her seat she added; “Come, Duchess; we must have a few minutes’ conversation in your chamber. You have got much to tell me of your sojourn in the Netherlands, of the friends of our church, and other things of notice; for we have only talked together casually since your return to England. You estrange yourself from the court; London has hardly seen you twice in all these years, and if I did not come to you I should be quite forgotten. In truth we are almost strangers; I see your son for the first time to-day, and Sir Richard has never even spoken of him in my presence. Is he your only child?” she asked, fixing her eyes upon Peregrine, but, without waiting for Catherine’s answer, she added; “Methinks I heard of a daughter whom you took abroad with you, or—was it not so? There was a strange story pre-

valent at the time, which I hardly recollect. Where is the little one? Is it not with you?"

"She was torn from me," replied the Duchess with downcast eyes.

"The destructive plague"—said Sir Richard.

"Not a word of that," interrupted the Queen,—"The child is dead then. I meant not to trouble your feelings. Come, come, let us talk of other things."

Peregrine was yet standing with folded arms and looking thoughtfully after both, when his father called out in an earnest voice, "Where are your thoughts, Lord Willoughby?"

"In the Netherlands," replied the youth, warmly; "Sooner or later the war will take us thither."

Sir Richard pressed his hand: both were silent, but they had understood each other.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN, at length, the evening came and the Queen had departed, and Sir Richard remained by the fire in the great hall conversing earnestly with some of his hunting companions, Peregrine softly stole into his mother's chamber. She had long panted for this moment. Not a single confidential word could she say to him during the whole of that bustling day, and yet so much lay at her heart, and, above all, his new relations to the court and to his country. And now he stood before her with so much modesty!—his unembarrassed mien, his soft bright eye, expressed no vain ambition; his heart, filled with unquenched desire, sought her with such filial devotion!—In the overflowing of her emotion she flung her arms about his neck, and, fixing her eyes upon him, could only say, “My excellent son!”

Peregrine imprinted a warm kiss upon her

hand, and something hovered about his lips that looked like complaint, but which melted away in a gentle smile. The Duchess considered him attentively.

“What would you say, my son?”

“That you are so heavenly good, and yet so cruel?” replied the other with vivacity.

“Peregrine! Already the old strain again! You know how that subject afflicts me, and why will you always harp upon it?”

“Because it often pains my breast so acutely that I must utter it, that I cannot help speaking of it to some one; and since you know not any means of alleviating the torment, at least do not blame me if at times its out-breaking should trouble you too?”

He was silent; his mother held his hand with her eyes sadly cast to earth.—“The Queen,” she said in a gentle voice, to pass over to something else;—“The Queen distinguished you to-day by the most friendly esteem, while she seemed to merely laugh at Essex.”

“And yet he entirely dedicates himself to flattering her humours! But I am not calculated for her; I am not calculated at all for the relations of life which I have this day learnt to know.”

“My son,” replied the Duchess, smiling; “At your years it is generally bashfulness that makes a man so philosophically cold amidst the motley crowd of life; the full enjoyment of society will come of itself with increasing confidence. How can you expect, at only sixteen years,——”

“Always reckoning my years!” interrupted Peregrine, discontentedly; “Is then time to be measured by days? By Heavens there lies so immense a space behind me that I can scarcely compass the extent of its circumstances. But to whom am I saying this? To one who has experienced a far severer fate than I have, and yet retains her youth in mind as well as body. It is you, dear mother, who have spoilt me. The idle jesting, the multitude of words, the

forced wit, the hypocrisy with one's self and others,—I cannot bear all this without a sensation of shame that drives the blood upon my heart. Even as a boy, by the side of the good King, I have felt at times my cheeks burn in witnessing the conversations, the falsehood, the profligacy, and the baseness of human nature."

The Duchess gazed on him silently in deep emotion, and after a pause said, "Do you know, Peregrine, that it is the intercourse with the King which has made you thus gloomy, and the melancholy manners of the country have given this dark colour to your imagination?"

"That may well be," sighed her son; "I often used to see the noble Sigismund weep in silence, and when I caressed him, and asked the reason of his grief, he would take me in his arms, kiss me, weep over me, and say,—'Ask not, my dear child; you know not what it is to carry a broken heart in your bosom.' And he was right; I fancied to myself a thousand things on this subject which I never could reconcile

with the King's restless activity, and his passion for the chase. But when Gilles, in his dark way, explained the meaning of those words by Sigismund's unhappy history, concluding with, 'This is always the punishment when, unmindful of our duties, we obey the heart.'—Oh, then I shuddered in every limb, and was as if on the rack whenever the King came to the castle. The first time after I had heard the heart-rending narrative,—I remember it as well as if it were yesterday,—the poor monarch appeared to me quite another sort of being. He rode that day a black horse; it rained hard, the wind swelled out his mantle, and the feathers drooped down from his cap; he saw me standing in an upper room, and raised his arm as a sign that he would take me upon his horse, but a cold shudder came over me and I seemed to see his dead mistress lying in his arms. The rider and his horse looked to me like spectres, and it was not till the King spoke that I recovered myself; yet even then his voice sounded strangely,

and I thought of other things than what he was speaking of. In those very tones he had despairingly invoked his beloved wife:—my heart throbbed, and I gazed fixedly on the King, who laughed as if nothing of all this had happened, and carelessly asked, ‘What is the matter, child?’ I did not know what to make of him, but since then I have always wept with him when I found him alone weeping in the evening twilight. Strange enough, too, how often have I and Rosa played the unfortunate couple in our sports! First the beautiful child was crowned, our playmates knelt to her and took the oath of fealty; then,—” Peregrine paused a moment, but soon continued, looking earnestly at the Duchess,—“Then she lay stiff and motionless. I would rush to her with the cry of ‘She is poisoned!’ press her warmly in my arms, and when she had acted her part too naturally, so that terror drew from me an unwonted exclamation, she would start up smiling, wind both arms about my neck, and half in emotion, half

in anger cry, 'For shame, Peregrine, it is but a jest; how can you think that I—'

Struck by the word that he held back, he now stood speechless before the Duchess, covering his face awhile with both hands. Catherine addressed him in a tone of gentle reproach.—

"My dear son, why do you purposely torment yourself with images that pain your heart? Is this the tone of feeling which you carry in to your new relations with the world? Does the day, which has made you a peer of the realm and the heir to a great property, deserve to end so mournfully? What, I pray you, has again so violently shaken your self-possession? Why do you fling those old melancholy shadows over the first bright moment of your youthful career?"

"Because the Queen's question has penetrated to my heart, because I repeat it and no one gives me a better answer than you gave Elizabeth. Is she dead? really dead? Can you, mother, with unchanging face say YES to your son?"

"Lord Willoughby seems, in the presence of

his mother, only conscious of his elevation," interrupted Catherine with displeasure. "He looks down upon her and hopes to compel what he would not have asked for in vain, if such a consolation could have been given to him. His own impatience cannot be more desirous to receive comfort than the anxious love of his tender parents is to yield it. Peregrine," she added, in a tone of grave rebuke, "These are the dreams of your boyhood, which are making a spoilt child of you."

"My dear mother," exclaimed Peregrine, covering her hand with kisses; "Do not be angry with your son; your loving heart has always received his complaint kindly. Forgive me if the changeful feelings of this day, which have so violently shaken my mind, have made me also violent in my manners. Put up with me as I am, and help me to understand myself. I confess to you, I cannot get rid of the idea that Rosamond still lives hid in some remote corner of the world,—that my father, and,—forgive me, mother,—and you too

could not bear the orphan, the mysterious foundling, to be so near your son. All has been changed in me since you, by way of consolation, dispelled the erroneous idea of my weeping for a sister, and I learnt that my tears were flowing for a strange maiden. I was then twelve years old; Rosa, the same; one sickness had prostrated both; I alone recovered, but regret for my companion threatened my health anew, and you long consulted with the Grey Man, who often sat by my bed-side, and the result was, that you thought to benefit me, and divert my fancy to other things by hinting at the mystery which threw this shadow over my mind."

"If you knew, Peregrine, how much these recollections pain me, how uselessly you afflict me, you would let that rest which cannot be remembered without grief to both of us. I assure you I *cannot* tell you more than what you know already, and why should you vex me with questions and explanations which occupy your mind so unreasonably?"

“ My good mother,” answered the youth smiling ; “ you have said more than you intended. I may confess that I know more than you would tell me.”

The Duchess coloured at these words, and with a face that vainly affected indifference, asked — “ You know ? — You must have got your information then from some vision.”

“ Yes, indeed, a vision ; for Gilles Boisy always appeared as indistinct as a vision, and he has vanished one knows not how nor whither.”

“ What would you with him ?” said the Duchess ; “ You are raking up the past to-day as if the old and new existence could be in life united. It is in vain ? the old is buried and must remain so. Time, my dear son, has taught me to forget much, and you also will learn the lesson of oblivion.”

“ It may be,” replied Peregrine thoughtfully ; “ but as yet I do not understand it. At all events, recollection never dies, for look ;—after

weeks and months have passed in which I have only thought slightly of the sweet girl, and her dear image has faded away into a pale shadow—even then it needs but a breath of air, or the perfume of a flower, and days return, feelings are renewed, ideas revive that I had long forgotten, and the old form of life is with me again, Let no one say, therefore, that THAT is dead which he feels living. But to come back to Gilles; there was to-day, in the Queen's suite, a man who wore his mantle just as he does; and when he turned with his profile to me, there was something so like in the play of his features and the motion of his hand, that I thought I saw the living Boisy before me. With his image came the recollection of all those troubles which he had helped us to go through, and how he watched over me one night when I was ill, and, bending down to me, softly whispered; 'Don't weep so; the little one lives, and you'll yet see one another again.' I was as if stunned by the words; my

tears stopt, but when I wanted to know more of the mystery, and pressed him earnestly, he made as if he said nothing, and I had been only dreaming."

"And so you had, no doubt; believe so, and drive these deceitful fancies out of your head."

"Believe so?—How lightly such a word flies through the air, and how heavily it falls upon the heart?"

"No more, no more;" cried the Duchess anxiously; "Your father comes; I hear him in the ante-room. Do not, I entreat you, mingle any after bitterness with the joys of this day."

"I will rather go and avoid all unpleasant discussion; and, besides, Essex intends leaving the castle to night, and I am to accompany him a part of the way. I do it with pleasure; a ride in night and darkness speaks more to the soul, and brings it more to rest, than a forced sleep in warm beds."

"Go, then, my dear son, and return with the morning as clear as the morning."

She embraced him in great agitation, but avoided his inquiring looks; and exclaimed;—
“ Quick, quick, if you would not grieve your father by that look of trouble.”

He pressed her hand with averted face, and, by a side door, slipt out of the apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

For a time Peregrine rode silently in the darkness by his young kinsman, who did not seem inclined to break the universal stillness, but nature, on the contrary, was so much the louder. The beautiful spring-day was succeeded by a turbulent evening, and from moor and meadow pale vapours arose, which collected in the air, while the hollow murmurs in the tops of the pines, and the shrill cries of the night-birds, announced the approaching storm. Soon there was a breaking and crashing in the forest, as if the earth were sundering; as if the deepest roots of life were being riven, and a grave dug beneath the feet of the passing traveller.

“We had better return, Essex,” exclaimed Peregrine, with his back for a moment against the increasing storm, and drawing his cloak more tightly about him.

“Return!” said the other, laughing—“By Heavens! I would just as soon be felled to the ground by the storm, and there lie, like those young trees here in the forest. No, no, my good friend; *forwards* is the word. I tell you,” he continued, exalting his voice, as if to bid defiance to the storm,—“I snuff the scent of powder in the air. Trust me, war is no longer far off, and he is wise who looks about for a place betimes. The Earl of Leicester’s present absence points at some secret mission, and, if I am not mistaken, the news that the Queen received to-day was from him.”

“Things have not yet gone so far as you imagine,” replied Peregrine. “Elizabeth will not break so soon with Spain.”

“Poh! Break or not break, she’ll always side with Orange.”

“Don’t holla that too loudly for the world to hear it.”

“Here, at least, walla have no ears; and if you would frighten me with the spirits of the

wood, I know a spirit that defies all others. And this is he, my friend, a child of daring, who can always repair his mischiefs."

"Always?" said Peregrine—"but suppose it as you say," he added, drawing up more closely to Essex; "what difference can it make to you whether you reach your father's castle to-night or to-morrow?"

"Only that I should know my fate four-and-twenty hours later. My thoughts fly across the sea, and if my uncle, Dudley, remain at the helm, we shall not want a secure harbour. By my troth"—and he drew up his neck more proudly, and turned his face with a secret delight to the fury of the storm,—"By my troth, the blood seeths more hotly in my veins whenever I hear the heroes named, who, at my age, had long since fleshed their maiden swords. Those were the times, Peregrine! when a young man sided with one or the other party, raised his own standard, or followed the colours of some one more powerful than himself. Then

were the feats of arms ! the fame of an individual outweighed gold, and the latter was often flung away to win the former, whereas we waste the time in schools, weary ourselves with the chase and running at the ring, and cheat our noble aspirations with sports and May-games. War ! War ! By Heavens ! Peregrine, I burn to look Alba in the eye—Bethink you,—the eye of Alba ! If you feel as I do, come with me. Nassau and Orange are raising troops for the freedom of the Netherlands, but it is all one what they fight for ; that's the man for me who dares to enter the lists with the greatest soldier of his time. Come, Peregrine, I'll present you to Leicester ; he will not, he cannot deny two such youths as us. He must feel what they may be to the good cause,—ay, what they are already.”

Peregrine shook his head and withdrew his hand. Essex continued,—“ How ? do you scruple to believe my words ? You hesitate. My Lord Willoughby has no wish to win his spurs.”

“Essex, the night is wild ; your brain, hot ; go to sleep, and let me know as soon as possible whether Leicester solicits the Queen’s permission for us to fight under William’s colours in the cause of the Protestant Netherlands.”

“Leicester solicit ? And why the Queen ? Or why ask at all for that which we can take ? Who can call the sea his own ? We sail across the water and are free.”

“Good night, Essex,” cried Peregrine, and turning his horse about, he galloped through the wood as if to fly from the overweening madness of his companion.

“Hear me,” shouted Essex after him ; but the storm made the rest of the indignant exclamation inaudible.

“Fool ! obstinate fool !” repeated the echo distinctly, and the screeching of owls mingled with it like the sounds of laughter.

“Fool !” said Peregrine to himself, almost doubting whether he did not deserve the reproach, for the thought of arms and war had

taken complete possession of his soul, that yet trembled from its former agitation. "If," he thought, "if my father,—he loves Orange,—Elizabeth too wishes to fix him in her interests. —Fool!—To fix Orange in her interests! And how? By two boys, who would make their first essay in arms! How much the heart can deceive itself."

At this moment he shuddered involuntarily, as his horse started back at some unseen object in the darkness, and rearing and snorting, refused to budge from the spot.

"What's the matter, foolish brute," said Peregrine, collecting himself, and dexterously bending so as to meet the back of his horse as the animal rose; he would soon, without doubt, have mastered him, had not a figure, rushing by at the instant, grazed the horse's side, which immediately reared bolt upright with his rider, furiously beating the air with his fore-feet, and threatening every moment to fall backwards.

"Who is it?" cried Peregrine, heated with

anger and exertion ; “ Who is it creeping about here so mysteriously in the night ? Stand, whoever your are, or by Heaven I’ll cut down the first that crosses my way again.”

The horse, finding the bridle loose, stretched out his neck and rushed onward so furiously as well as suddenly, that Peregrine was thrown upon his neck, but he soon regained his seat, and exclaimed—“ Ha ! if you are for throwing me off I’ll give you the spurs and we’ll hunt this gebbling which has caused the quarrel between us.” He was just going to keep his word, when a cry of terror struck his ear rather than his heart, for it was the tones of a man’s voice that seemed to steal from lips quivering with terror. He bent downwards a little to the side whence the sound came, and seized the withered arm of a man who trembled all over, and who was dumb to his repeated call of “ Who are you ?” but it seemed less from obstinacy than from inability to reply. At length, of need, came out the words, “ Let me go on my way, I conjure you.”

But Peregrine, who had been so much excited by the events of the day and had been filled with a sort of dread by this strange being, was too anxious for a closer knowledge of him to let his prey go again so easily. He said, tauntingly, "Your way? Well, then, we'll go your way together."

With these words he leapt from his horse, and grasping the figure firmly,—perhaps to be certain it was corporeal,—and with the other hand leading his horse by the bridle, he hurried on in all the wonted impetuosity of youth. He had not, however, gone far, when the stranger, recovering his composure, exclaimed resolutely, "Go on, drag me to the scaffold! I always knew that it must come to this, soon or late, and here it is! Well; I do not fear it."

"Man!" cried Peregrine, pausing in deep emotion; "who art thou?"

"A tool in the hand of Providence, which it can break at its pleasure, when and where it will," was the calm reply.

Peregrine knew not whether it was shame or generosity that suddenly softened his feelings and inspired him with gentler sentiments towards the unknown; but he said, in a voice much milder than before, "It is not my intention to harm you, yet your mysterious manners would have excited suspicion with any one. Why should you hesitate to make me acquainted with the object of your nightly wandering?"

"You are very unjust," replied the other. "Can you tell what reasons I may have for my silence, whether important or otherwise? And, besides, what right have you to inquire into my secrets?"

The youth, confused awhile by his stern impressive language, and with the conviction that he had no common man before him, said, with some hesitation, "Perhaps you do not know that you are on my father's manor, and I have a right, therefore, to inquire into the purposes of any one who is loitering about here. My suspicions, moreover, are justified by the words

you let fall in your alarm just now, and I ask you what you meant by saying the time was come that was to lead you to the scaffold?"

The unknown paused awhile in silence, when he drew a concealed lantern from under the wide folds of his upper garment, and, turning the full light of it on Peregrine, said in a tone of superiority, "You are young; the darker passions of age yet slumber in your bosom; and though your eyes are blind, you yet can feel as a man. You are, besides, of knightly birth, and can as little wish to attack the defenceless as to destroy the persecuted. My habit," he added, after a brief hesitation, and watching every change in the youth's face as he went on, "my habit betrays my rank to you without any farther explanation. I am a Catholic priest. The ban of the heretic Queen would drive us out of England, if we thought like your Protestant divines, who saved themselves and abandoned the brothers of their faith. But we live only for the execution of our duties, and as long as there is but one

upon this infected island, who professes the true faith, that one must not live or die without the holy rites of our church. You meet me on the road to a dying woman, who desires the consolation of the sacrament, and my way, though dark and mysterious, was yet not dark as yours is: I am guided by a light that is extinguished for you; and, therefore, it is you mistake a servant of the Lord, and stop his way though each of his steps is anxiously counted by an overburthened soul. And now, if you detain me any longer, be it at the risk of your future damnation or salvation.

“How!” replied Peregrine, “do you dare to exercise your functions here in despite of the Queen’s commands? Do you live amongst your enemies, and thus expose yourself and the customs which you will not abjure? Who, I pray you, in this general excitement, this just indignation against the bloody persecutors of Protestantism, will give shelter to a Catholic priest?”

“Heaven’s roof yonder, which is of the Lord,” replied the ecclesiastic; “these tall, protecting trees, and these hard rocks, which open and hide the outcasts in their dark caverns, they too are for us! Be sure, the faithful children of the church will not want a home, though all doors were closed against them, as, alas, the obdurate hearts of this perverted world have closed them. In the labyrinths of the woods, in caves, or inhospitable moors, our knee bends before the image of the crucified, and the Holy One, whom we do not invoke in vain, watches over us for our protection.”

“Go,” said Peregrine, after a moment of agitated reflection; “I am not your judge; do as you can: the world is not eternity, and all error is but for a short time. May God, therefore, look with mercy on you as on me! Go! I have not seen you;—but hide the light in your lantern, for there has been much traffic on the road to-day. Quick; hasten to the unfortunate, who waits for you.”

“I fear,” replied the Priest, “that I shall be too late. The sick woman was expected to die many hours ago; and even if death should be delayed by the prayers of the pious till now that she looks for my presence, she may yet fall under the unequal strife, when she finds her hopes disappointed.”

“You grieve me,” said Peregrine, looking anxiously at the darkness which made it impossible for the feeble old man to get on with any speed. “You grieve me much! It will be a reproach to me for life, if I have to think that I increased the pangs of a dying person. Can you trust me? I will willingly take you on my horse, and bring you as quickly as possible to the place of your destination.”

The Priest looked at him with a quick but piercing glance, and then said hastily—“I trust you!” It seemed as if every thing, for the moment, depended on the fulfilment of his wishes, and as if this were of still more weight with him than the danger to which he exposed himself.

“The changeful Lords of England—” he said, mounting the horse with the assistance of his protector—“the changeful Lords of England don’t stand on too much ceremony with their religion, and it may easily flatter your pride to show generosity to an enemy.”

“Do not attribute to my actions any other motives than they really have,” interrupted Peregrine. “If you cannot comprehend them, trouble yourself no more about the matter, but thank Heaven that you get off scot-free.”

From this moment the conversation was broken up between them. Peregrine began to weigh the strangeness of his situation, the illegality of his conduct, and the necessity of concealing it from his father, if he would not be a traitor to him who had received his pledge of secrecy. The farther they went the more painful grew these contending relations, and he now repented the precipitate haste which had led him from an unjust aggression to an assistance so repugnant to his feelings. The Priest, on his

part, did not like to break the silence from fear of a discovery on the high-way, and, besides, his restless mind was occupied by various reflections.

In this way the two ill-matched associates went on in silence till they reached a remote house, the fore-court of which was faintly lit by the glimmer of the fire within. The Monk looked out from his cowl, and, pulling Peregrine gently by the arm, said, "This is the place;" whereupon the latter leapt from his horse and helped off his unknown companion.

"Farewell," he cried to the stranger, who slipped in at the half-open door, and, forgetful of Peregrine in his anxiety, asked—"Does she still live?"

A similar feeling of sympathy for the sick person kept Peregrine listening for a moment before the wretched hovel. In eager expectation of the answer to that inquiry, he stood with his head bent forward in the direction of the door that had been left open, but the heavy

step of the person who came forward to receive the Priest, made the brief answer unintelligible, and the latter then went on to the sick person, in an inner chamber.

The window had been left open to let in air, as is often the case with a person who has long been struggling in the death-throes, and Peregrine's feet involuntarily bore him beneath the opening, when he heard a feeble voice, saying in French—"I know nothing of that dreadful death; at that time I was not with the Queen,—it was not till she was flying from Glasgow,——"

"Good, good," interrupted the Monk; "and since she has been at Tutbury, your son Gilles regularly brought the letters, which——"

"The last," stammered the dying woman, "lies here, underneath my pillow. Take it, my Lord Bishop, before it falls into other hands."

A rustling of papers told Peregrine that the Monk had followed her directions, who then

anxiously asked, "When was your son last with you?" The answer was indistinct. "Did he reveal nothing to you about that mysterious child? And do you believe with the Queen that it is Jane——"

The death-rattle now grew so strong with the dying woman, that not another word was intelligible, and the Monk began to pray aloud. Peregrine stood rooted to the spot, repeating to himself, as if in a dream—"Gilles!—Gilles' mother! What mysterious child is it that she knows so much of?"

CHAPTER VIII.

Lost in deep thought, Peregrine yet stood there with his arm leaning on the horse, and his hand resting on his head, and looked with downcast eyes into an endless abyss of wild and stormy feelings. Meanwhile all had become quite quiet by the dead in the chamber within. Probably the Monk rested a few minutes from the exhaustion of his forced travel; and, besides, he could not well find a more secure refuge than that which protected the dead body.

The day now broke, and the cold breath of the morning air was on his forehead. He shuddered; the thought of the dead awoke him from his dreams, and he gazed on the cottage which stood there in the twilight, so black and ruined, impressing his mind with the image of lowliness and poverty, as of vicissitude and decay.

The heavy tread of its owner, who was probably a Catholic, and, as such, the protector of the dead, was now heard again, and Peregrine became alarmed at the idea of being detected at the door as a spy and listener; he mounted his horse, therefore, hastily and, recollecting that he had a long way yet to Castle Barbican, spurred him into his quickest paces.

On getting home he found all in that hurry and bustle which unexpected and important guests cause in every family. He must have been later, too, than he had imagined, for the servants bustled to and fro through the hall, carrying up the breakfast, and there was a cry of "More dried fish and butter for the Netherlanders."

"Ha!" said Peregrine to himself—"does the wind blow that way?" But he did not like to appear, for the first time, before the strangers in his present disorder; and, besides, he had many reasons for wishing to speak with his mother

beforehand, but, on asking after her, he was told that she as well as Sir Richard had been since an early hour with the strangers who had come in the night, and were earnestly conversing with them by the fire-side in the great hall. The desire of knowing more of the guests stimulated Peregrine to very minute inquiries, but he got little satisfaction from the imperfect statements of the bustling servants. For the most part occupied with waiting, they observed little of what past beyond their own sphere. Peregrine turned away discontentedly from them, uncertain how the next moment might present him to the strangers, when Ralph Partridge, who had long since been exalted to the superintendence over kitchen and cellar and was now rather warm from the early drinking and his broken sleep, crossed him with the exclamation, "Ah, is it you, my melancholy night-adventurer? By the Lord, you have taken time for your journey! Well! what say the elves? Have you got the secret from them? But what's the

wager you know as much as nothing? You are in the same plight as we were, and the fairing came to us in a dream. Such a fairing too The whole castle full of guests! and guests, my Lord, who seem as if they would carry off half England."

"Oho!" said Peregrine, pleased with the frank humour of his old friend; "the strangers eat and drink too much to please you?"

"They are amphibious as ourselves," replied Ralph, visibly taken with his own conceit;—"amphibious, my dear Sir, for they are as familiar with the fluid as the substantial."—And he shook with laughter, as he made a motion towards the cellar.

"Stop a minute," cried Peregrine. "Tell me who these hungry and thirsty souls are."

"Who are they," replied Ralph;—"Ah folks of quality,—of very great quality," he added, in a drawling tone, which was meant to show the full extent of his respect. "Then you don't know yet? You have seen no one

Go in, my dear Peregrine; go in; go in; the dead sometimes come to life again!—Those who have been long believed dead.”

“Those who have been long believed dead?” exclaimed Peregrine, vehemently. “For Heaven’s sake, Ralph, what do you mean?”

“Why, in truth, that’s more than I well know myself,” replied the delighted Partridge—“but can’t you guess?”

“Do you help my lazy memory?”

“Don’t think of such a thing; it’s not to be told so lightly. It is a secret; but go and see yourself. He has grown very old; but a noble fellow still, that must be allowed; he opened his last bottle of Tokay at your christening. He has the heart of an angel—of an angel,” added Ralph, as he turned the key of the cellar-lock, and carefully descended the steep stairs.

“Now, then, he is as good as buried for the next hour,” thought Peregrine.

He hastened to his chamber, dressed himself; and in a short time entered the hall,

gazing anxiously on the guests who sate at breakfast, and who, engaged in conversation, did not perceive him at first, till an old man of lofty stature, stroking the hair from his forehead, and half in doubt, half with a smile of certainty, turned his eyes on him, with the exclamation—"That can be no one but he!" At the same time the stranger rose from his seat, shook him warmly by the hand, and at length, overpowered by his feelings, pressed him to his heart.

In the mean time the Duchess had joined them, who immediately saw her son's confusion, and that no appearance of strangeness might chill the old man's warmth of emotion, exclaimed, without allowing Peregrine time to answer,—
"My dear son, our friend is restored to us through a miracle,—that friend whose benevolence breathed life into your infancy. The deeply-lamented Launoi, whom report had numbered among the victims of the Inquisition, but a few months since came out of his prison at Tournay.

into the light of the world, to which he anew dedicates his best energies!"

"Reverend Sir," said Peregrine, deeply moved; "that I never could see you, never express my gratitude and admiration, has always been with me a subject of bitter regret whenever my mother has spoken of you, and however frequently and warmly I urged her to such relations.—You really are alive! are here in Castle Barbican! and I can tell you how much I honour you?"

"My good young friend," replied Launoi, "you give me back again what I once lent to you, a new life by sympathy and affection. Nothing does one so much good as the warm love of a noble heart. I have forgotten my chains and imprisonment since I have lived amongst the noble souls to whom I will now introduce you, convinced that in so doing I shall render your youth as great a service as I once did to your helpless infancy by food and fire. These," he added, turning to three stately men, who had

courteously risen to greet the son of the house, "these are the Counts Bergen, Hochstaaten, and Kuilenburg. They come to seek of England's great Queen aid and protection for the Netherlanders in their enterprise. If their design succeed, Lord Willoughby will hardly be the last to join the colours of the Prince of Orange."

"We have crossed the sea," said the hasty Bergen, who loved to come to the point at once—"We have crossed the sea with the actual intention of recruiting. Our object is no less known than our zeal, and the breast of the youth, as of the man, is open of itself to the call of freedom; words are not needed to it; the blood of Egmont, the blood of so many nobles, cries for revenge. The tyranny of the Inquisition, Alba's lust of murder!—where is the heart that does not shudder at their mention? Where the arm that does not convulsively raise itself in opposition to such monstrous cruelties?"

Peregrine stared at the Count, but without any sign of sympathy.

“ Not so,” said the Count of Hochstaaten, interrupting the vehement Bergen; “ Our object is not to allure England’s noble sons into the fiery whirlpool of our war; we come only to give a neighbour-state, that holds the same opinions with ourselves, an idea of the situation of the Netherlands, of the oppression and the hopes of an unhappy people who have been submitted to the Spanish yoke, not by nature, nor choice, nor inclination, but by a marriage inheritance.”

“ A people,” interrupted Kuilenburg, “ that is to close its ears, suppress its living spirit, renounce its faith, and follow a stranger’s will as just good enough to be a dowry for a daughter.”

“ You do not answer,” cried Bergen, impatiently confronting the modest reserve of Peregrine; “ do you disapprove what the council of wise men, what a hero like Orange, have decided?”

“ My view of the matter,” replied Peregrine,

blushing, "cannot in any respect have a value in your eyes; nor should I, with my inexperience, even venture to mention it before you. Permit me, therefore, to listen to your words that I may thence learn what I ought to know."

"That is not so much our object," rejoined Bergen, "as to blow the sparks which lie dormant in every one."

"Here, in England, you will not find it necessary to fan the flames of war and honour, and, assuredly, no hand will be idle that is armed by the Queen's summons. We fight, then, at her command, and shall nowise deceive the expectations of the noble Netherlanders."

"Heaven keep us from every shadow of injurious doubt," exclaimed Hochstaaten hastily; "we willingly believe that the weal of the church lies as near the hearts of our brothers in faith as it does to our own. England has sufficiently declared itself to all Europe by the election of a Protestant Queen."

“ By the election of a Queen !” re-echoed Peregrine, while the blush of shame and anger were strangely mingled on his brow ! “ Here, with us, we do not allow of any such right of election ; hereditary right decides, and if THAT did not speak for Elizabeth, by Heavens, she would not sit on England’s throne from any other right.”

“ That right, my good youth,” said Bergen, making light of it, “ speaks in many tongues. If we look to the variable doctrines of your Lords for the last twenty years, we shall find that they were at one time in favour of Jane Grey, and at another of the Catholic Mary, as now they are of Queen Elizabeth. There are many, too, even now, who adhere to the Scottish prisoner, and others who are hunting after a child of Jane’s that is said to be exposed in some remote corner. Little is requisite to arm thousands for these real or imaginary personages, and if Mary even in her prison could con-

trive to bring the heads of Norfolk and Northumberland to the block, the Suffolks may also find the way to English hearts."

"You do well," interrupted the Duchess with mild earnestness, "to try the fidelity and obedience of one whom you would enlist as your soldier. And you, Peregrine, have nobly stood the proof," she added, giving her hand to her son. "The Prince, I should think, would be satisfied, and reckon on none that fight under his colours more securely than on those who follow them at a higher command in the submission of a subject."

The Netherlanders agreed with the Duchess, yet something like a cloud of discontent passed over the brow of Bergen, who turned the discourse, not without bitterness, on the Spaniard's government, on Alba, and on the oath which drove him and Orange from their country, breaking out at last into "Oh, that Egmont had followed us!"

"Heaven forbid!" cried Peregrine unguardedly; "He died so great and so unsullied!"

"I think," said Kuilenburg, sensitively, "we LIVE neither little nor sullied! It had been much easier for us to die without an effort, lamented by many, than to struggle at once against regal tyranny and popular arrogance. People generally look at a thing, which concerns others, but superficially in its reflection on external life, and content themselves with an image, though the most important, the reality, is wanting."

"You speak justly," observed Sir Richard, who was anxious to conciliate tempers, and learn in the course of quiet conversation the state of things and the spirit which had formed itself in the general ferment, as well as its purposed object.

Led on by him, Hochstaaten unfolded the views of Nassau and Orange. The bold question was hazarded, whether the state, broken off from Spain, would choose its peculiar go-

vernor, or seek the protection of some greater power. In the last case Sir Richard thought that France was not to be overlooked, which plainly entertained such a hope, or it would not have been so prompt with its assistance. Hochstaaten was prudently silent, but Kuilenburg and Bergen, less cautious, anticipated things, boldly building up their firmest hopes upon insecure ground, when Launoï calmly said, "Why should we inquire into what may be? that is in the will of God. If the purification of the church, the freedom of the revealed word, the undisturbed mediation of the Saviour,—if these are no longer the highest and only objects of our efforts, neither the world nor Heaven will forgive this division amongst its children. I find the land-mark, from which we first set out, is very far removed."

"Naturally enough," cried Bergen—"opposition notches both steel and iron, and divisions are not reconciled by strife. Every battle must be fought out; we ought, there-

fore, to avoid wasting time in words, which are wafted away by the air of good swords. We have already talked away too much time here. To London! my friends," he cried, rising from his seat—"our way lies to the Queen, and if we bring back a favourable answer,—Sir Richard,—my Lord Willoughby,—then I hope the seeds, which have been sown in this hour, may strike root, and the Belgian tree of freedom grow up proudly from them."

They shook each other by the hand, and were preparing to leave the hall, when Bergen, again turning back, said, "You, venerable Launoi, will await us here, as you proposed from the beginning, and in the meantime gain over to us the heart of the young Lord Willoughby, that does not exactly seem to beat too warmly for its neighbours."

"Is it indeed so?" asked Launoi, as the other closed the door; and Sir Richard, following out his visitors, left him alone with Peregrine and the Duchess.

“ I might perhaps belie myself,” replied Peregrine, “ if I were to attempt to give words to my present feelings. There is a something in those strange and great events which fills me with anxiety, a something which I can not name. Orange is unintelligible to me: I should admire him with my whole soul, but,”—he paused involuntarily; the Duchess signed to him not to proceed, when Launoi, laying his hand upon his shoulder, repeated, “ But?”

“ Yes, I own it,” said Peregrine hastily; “ he does not appear to me to have always acted honourably, and there are moments when I feel more esteem for Alba than for him.”

Launoi, surprised and unable to master his first impulse, turned away from him with a low exclamation of, “ God deliver us! what is this?” while his mother blushed and looked aside. All were silent, till Peregrine, in confusion, resumed,—“ I have, perhaps, expressed my feelings awkwardly, and thus had the misfortune to displease you. The sense, however,

of my defective words is simple ; the open act attracts me more than the secret ; I abhor all mysterious conduct. Alba's iron tread is heard by the whole world before it approaches, while the light step of Orange is inaudible even to the listener."

"Humph!" exclaimed Launoi, walking up and down thoughtfully ; "I understand you ; perfectly understand you. There is a greatness in Alba, a fearful greatness ! who can deny it ? He holds the gates of the old time fast upon their hinges. His measured conduct is fixed and unalterable as the hour which is gone by never to return ; the strong, marked features, nearly allied to bony death,—every one knows *them*, while growing nature approaches mysteriously with imperceptible movements, and, when the bud opens, confounds the astonished senses. It is the different destination of either man that makes them so unlike, so incomparable. Hard is the task to be COMPELLED by the chain of events to that which at first once scarcely thought of."

“ Oh, if you did but know,” cried Peregrine, “ how willingly I would esteem what I so often gaze at with increasing wonder,—how my whole heart throbs for the stage of youthful action, and what therefore I would give to feel myself at home in this! Perhaps you will clear up this darkness to me; perhaps your hand may guide me?”

“ My best Peregrine,” replied Launoi, “ hope not too much from the individual; go boldly forward, and the twisted knot will unravel itself in time; for we know things truly but when we come in contact with them. You have learnt too much for your youth; the monotony of the present weighs upon you, and you should go abroad into the world.”

“ I think so too,” exclaimed Peregrine, glancing joyfully at his mother; “ perhaps the Queen may decide quickly, and then what a glorious prospect opens to me!”

Launoi turned to the Duchess, saying, “ On your return from Poland you were a long time

in the Netherlands. Did you not make any connexions there which may ultimately be of use to your son?"

"We met with a heavy affliction in that country," replied Catherine, looking anxiously at her son, "and were obliged from various causes to stay there longer than we at first intended. Peregrine will hardly carry back thither any pleasant recollections."

A speechless intercourse of looks and gestures here took place between the mother and son, which was at last interrupted by Launoi's requesting to know more of that long interval which had divided them.

"Strange," said the Duchess, after a momentary consideration of the past; "strange, how with advancing age the different periods of time blend together in the recollection. A year is an eternity to youth; life, when it is not yet fixed, fills and shapes every moment to a particular section of existence, the extent of which increases in proportion as the consciousness is still

capable of appropriating every trifle. If I now collect those sixteen years that we were separated there seems to me but little to be said of them ; and the more so, as I remember to have written to you of our meeting with A-Lasco and the altered plan of our journey which led us into Poland. The melancholy stillness of our life there, our remotion from all we had been accustomed to, the beginning of a new mode of life in maturer years—these things, with their effect upon the mind, blend together into one like the images of a misty day, whose veiled sun shines in a flood of tears. This sun was the poor good King Sigismund, who generously received the fugitives, and tenderly endeavoured to heal the wounds which our native land had inflicted, and which only our native land could cicatrize. We inhabited one of his castles, whither he came to visit us almost daily, without any retinue. Married a second time, he never could forget his lost wife. A profound melancholy had taken entirely possession of his

soul, and the wounded mind, which could not mourn without shuddering with horror, was irrecoverably thrown off its balance. You know, reverend Sir, the history of the King of Poland, and know how the suspicion, that his own mother had poisoned his beloved wife on her bridal day, must have revolted his inmost nature, and shaken a disposition that was only too prone to yielding. In the evening view of this blighted life our own was to gain its new form, and the form was in consequence dark enough! We remained, however, ten years in Poland, for custom, even when painful, often binds more strongly than youthful prosperity can allure. The altered condition of England had long promised us safety, but we could not conquer our repugnance to the sight of so many traces of desolation, or even to the new appearance of things. The auxiliaries, sent at that time by England to the French Protestants, gave my husband an opportunity of earning anew, under Elizabeth's colours, the rights of a citizen in his native

country. He went to Havre to join his companions in arms, while Sigismund detained me and the children with various pretexts of unknown dangers. The unhappy monarch had a dread of solitude, and there were none but strangers to whom he could unburthen his heart without reserve. Contrary to my wishes, I yielded to his entreaties till in the spring of the year 64, my anxiety about Sir Richard, increased by the absence of all letters from him, could be no otherwise appeased than by immediately leaving Poland. The amiable King released us with the ready yielding of a heart which has never ceased to control itself, though he suffered so much the more from the idea of parting, as he felt a sure foreboding that we should never meet again. He only felt too truly; a few weeks ago I received, together with the news of his death, a rich sabre inlaid with jewels, which he bequeathed to his favourite, Peregrine."

The Duchess was silent for several minutes, in which the image of the too tender and melancholy King seemed to be called up to her memory by the mention of the beautiful weapon; and Peregrine, even more affected than herself, sat wrapt up in his own thoughts. At last she resumed, saying; "A wearisome travel through Germany brought us to the Netherlands, and we past through Guelders to Breda, where Orange was then at utter variance with the Regent, and in a disposition that his stern mind kept watch over with no little difficulty. Through him I learnt the ill success of the English arms; Havre was in the hands of the Catholics; a similar fate threatened Dieppe, and a destructive sickness raged in the army. I trembled for my husband and, to be nearer to him, betook myself to a castle of my relation, St. Aldegonde, which lay upon the coast. Dieppe fell; the troops returned; and, the sick having been early brought farther into the land, the malignant fever spread

to us. Sir Richard, himself unwell, found us only feebly contending with the infection ; soon,—”

She paused with a look of pain at her son, uncertain whether she should venture in his presence to recall a period which might affect him too strongly ; but Launoi, without however knowing the cause of her hesitation, helped her out of her difficulty by saying ; “ Then it was not till long afterwards that your Grace recovered and returned to England ? ”

“ Very long,” she replied in a tone as if that period came like a dream between her other recollections ; “ The disturbances then broke out on all sides in Belgium and Flanders ; the GREY MANTLES were seen every where, the BOND OF THE GEUSEN spread from place to place, innovating upon established order and morality. In the mean time Sir Richard, having recovered, hastened to present himself to the Queen in London, but Peregrine’s continued illness obliged me still to defer my voyage across the water ; I

however left the castle of St. Aldegonde, who was engaged in the conspiracy of the nobles and went to Ghent. The dreadful tumults of the Iconoclasts, the wild convulsions of spirits, the divisions and havoc in families created by the war of opinions,—I have experienced them all, and have had many a hard strife both within and without. Then, too, the wild Brederode, with his licentious hordes! the cruelties of insolent and arbitrary power! Oh, my friend, there were hours which waked in me the fearful question,—Is rebellion thus necessarily linked to rebellion? Is the bursting through one bond connected with the breaking up of all others.”

Launoi here looked surprised and thoughtfully at the Duchess, who paused as if ashamed of the avowal she had made, but she immediately after went on to wipe away the unfavourable impression; “If such shadows fell upon me, how could I prevent the opening mind of the boy from being darkened amidst such changing impressions, or the feelings thus violently acted

upon from being excited in one way or the other. In a sickly state, with the weak fancy liable to every emotion, the witness of barbarous licentiousness and tyrannic punishment—Oh, my dear Sir, you must attribute to this unfortunate combination of circumstances whatever may appear to you strange and unintelligible in Peregrine.”

The youth listened intently while his mother thus excused him, and when Latnoi replied, “I feel rather than understand this youthful temper,” he exclaimed with vivacity; “You have named the very way in which we should appear to each other; from feeling awakes judgment which is permanent.”

“Not always,” said the priest; “we are not sufficiently pure to trust ourselves so far. There is a higher standard than our heart, which changes its language with the changing times.”

“You will not understand me,” replied Peregrine, almost mournfully; “I speak of that magic mirror in the inmost sanctuary of the

heart, which, like the eye, HAS an object without itself knowing that it has, and by degrees conveys the image to the consciousness. It is so you love your friends, so you tolerate your enemies, and so you manfully oppose that which is repugnant to your feeling."

" You speak, my dear son, without knowing it, of the mystery of the eternal word. It is the essence of the highest love, which you have painted, but which no one has from nature; that which we often mistake for it is only an impulse, frequently a spurious feeling, which puts on the shape and colour of its model, and yet is no more than self-love."

Sir Richard, entering the room, broke up the conversation for the time; he was too full of the expectations, arising out of the unexpected visit, too much occupied with the events of the hour and with what might be their future consequence, not to return immediately to the subject. He made no secret of his wish to take part in a struggle, on the result of which seemed

to him to rest the free course of the human spirit and its independent development in the progress of life. There was much discussion on this head, which at last made Launoi exclaim ; “ From all that appears at present, I can only conclude that *evil must* be, but woe to them from whom it shall proceed. The Protestants are not, indeed, pure ; and, as revolvers, they are uncertain in their motions ; they are not, however, the *new kingdom itself*, to which they are only to pave the way, and if they are licentious, whose is the fault but theirs who would compel submission to arbitrary laws ? Alas, there are always many cold dark hours between the night and morning.”

“ Let us, therefore, endeavour that the day may break ;” cried Bertie with an impatience of which he was probably ashamed, for he immediately added ; “ How eagerly man presses forward, never finding rest, though rest is the constant object of his struggles ! Here we have most happily met after a long separation, a

chance which years ago neither of us could have dreamt of; it came unexpectedly as the blessings of life usually do, and now what does it advantage us that our wishes have been realized? We are at work again with fresh wishes."

"Still the old Bertie!" said Launoi smiling and holding out his hand to him; "Your fancy continues as young as if no storms had ever blown over it, and you stand before me now just the same as at Wesel. Fate never urged you on so violently as you hurry yourself beyond the limits of the present; but let it be, my son; the next hour may bring what you expect."

CHAPTER IX.

THE well-meant consolation was not, however, so soon realized as Sir Richard had confidently hoped it would. Years past, and still Elizabeth hesitated to come to any determination, for though she gave Orange every assistance in secret, she did not wish to have the appearance of it with the world. It seemed to her requisite that her alliance with France should be more certain before she broke with Spain.

Messengers hurried backwards and forwards, while the Duke of Alençon, now Duke of Anjou, drawing together troops on the borders of the Netherlands, made a journey through the Brabant states in company with his sister Margaret of Valois. Alba had returned to Spain; Don John of Austria entered Luxembourg as the Regent of the southern provinces, while Orange, holding the same situation in the north, carried

on a hard unequal contest against domestic factions within and the Spaniards without. The great art of all politicians, the art of dividing, was practised here by Philip, and distrust and envy were to attack William more successfully than even the arms of Alba. The moment was decisive for the Netherlands; some of the nobility, discontented with the Prince, had chosen Mathew of Austria for their head; discord was at its height and naturally communicated itself to other countries.

Bertie wasted his days in increasing care and vexation to think that all had been in vain, his hopes deceived, and that even Elizabeth was not what she had appeared to be. Hardly fifty years of age, he felt a thirst for action that gave a keenness of manner to his discontent, and visibly darkened his looks and habits. In the meantime Peregrine led a strange life, displeasing to his father, unintelligible to his mother, and a source of mockery to his young companions. He, however, did not think of justifying himself, but

was generally found occupied with Spanish or Latin books, which he never quitted except to wander for half the day and night through the thickest of the wood, tire out the hounds and horses, and return to the castle loaded with game. Society he avoided; London and the court he only visited, when compelled, in the society of his father; yet, when there, his conduct was such that he would have been much sought after had he been willing to be found. When reproached for his retired manners he excused himself with his youth and promised a freer intercourse after he had made a more sufficient trial of himself in life.

Essex, in the meanwhile, accompanied his uncle Dudley on several embassies, and himself undertook a mission to Margaret of Valois, who, during her residence in Flanders, made the interests of the people her own, and carried on a confidential correspondence with Elizabeth. It was not difficult to penetrate the import of these secret negotiations; Essex *guessed* that an al-

liance between the Queen and Anjou was on the carpet ; Leicester knew it, and the bands were firmly held by those who had them in their grasp, that they might be able to rend them asunder the moment England's advantage was secured, or the influence of the Dudleys endangered.

Essex returned to London, and subsequently to Barbican, giddy with Mary's beauty, the easy manners of the French court, its gallantry, and its influence on the individual ; full of all he had heard and seen, the words flowed no less fully from his lips. The Duchess, like all other mothers, jealously anxious for her son's fame, listened with divided feelings to the story of those events and connexions in which another than her Peregrine had mingled, like him a youth, and of lower rank and more limited means. Nor did she conceal her feelings, but, when alone with her son, poured out her heart to him, concluding with, " The time is come when Lord Willoughby should take possession of his estates, manage his concerns for himself, and maintain that

place in the state which befits his birth.”—She hesitated, perplexed how to change the formal tone of her speech to the more pliant notes of anxious affection.

“ Well ?” said Peregrine, locking her hand tenderly in his own.

“ Well, my son,” continued the Duchess with unguarded vivacity; “ must it not grieve me to see others enjoying the advantages which would be yours if you did not indifferently suffer yourself to be pushed aside, confining yourself in so narrow a space that it is a matter of difficulty for any to follow you into it. Essex sees the world, learns to know courts and manners, serves his Queen, is distinguished by her, while you,—subdue your ambition so completely that *all this moves you but little.*”

“ I confess it, so it really is ;” said Peregrine gently, fearing to wound his mother by the declaration.

“ So it is,” repeated Catherine ; “ And why is it so, my son ? In truth, your grandfather had

other ideas of the duties of a nobleman; he knew that they are inseparable from his exertions in the state, and to those exertions he dedicated himself with all his soul."

"Would to God my exertions were called for in their proper place!" replied Peregrine.

"And that place is?" interrupted his mother rather sharply, as if she meant to say, "are you so much at home in public affairs that you can point out your place?"

But Peregrine exclaimed rather bluntly, "It is not precisely where Essex stands; for that I am not calculated; but the moment will come when every serious call will find me. For the present, excuse me, good mother, from saying what I think."

"No, Peregrine," said the Duchess, taking up the broken thread of the discourse; "No, Peregrine; you must open your mind to me; your silence is neither slothfulness nor dreaming, as your father and many others imagine; there is a purpose in it; you restrain yourself with diffi-

culty, and bury that which is found more deeply and cautiously in your breast. Why is this? Why do you seem so opposite to the world and the feelings of your youth?"

“Great Heavens! Man scarcely understands himself in the flight of his thoughts, in the aspiration after the permanent, and his disquiet in the unfixed and fluctuating. There is so much awakened in us by the new doctrines! the old is not dead, the new is yet unformed; I fear to deceive myself, and how therefore can I speak of that self to others? The fear of being deemed singular makes me really so in the eyes of the world; at court, more particularly, I am in bad repute as to that; I must confess it, the anxious farce with the Queen goes against me. The more I honour her, the more I am vexed by the idle vanity that nestles so familiarly in her great heart that she reveals herself without shame to the gaze of every fool. So artful, so completely masked in every thing else, and in this so unguarded, I might almost say childish!

Everywhere showing an open heart, how can I breathe freely at the court, how look the Queen with confidence in the face while she only wears the mask of frankness, and privately commits the same cruelties that her sister committed openly and with the idea that she was pleasing Heaven? Elizabeth is a Protestant, she cannot mistake the mild spirit of the Gospel, and she once modestly rejected the title of supreme head of the church which her father had borne, because she deemed it of too much import, and why then does she now set herself up for the judge of other faiths? Why has she become the merciless persecutor of the old belief? How can she justify her unprecedented conduct towards the unfortunate Queen of Scots?"

"That is a spot in the life of Elizabeth," replied the Duchess dejectedly.

"A black, indelible spot!" cried Peregrine. "Oh, she has no heart," he continued, in greater agitation than might have been expected from the subject. "You all know it,

and therefore it is you keep from her eyes that which they would meet to destroy. You know Elizabeth's insincerity; you fear it; and yet the lips of all of you overflow with her exaggerated praises."

"My son," said Catherine, passing over his rebuke, "you do not seem to share the general admiration for your Queen!"

Peregrine looked at her awhile in silence, and then flung himself into her arms, exclaiming, "Ah, my good mother, I am a stranger,—I see it—in this unintelligible world!"

For a moment both remained thus in silent emotion, when Peregrine tore himself from her arms, left the chamber, and shortly after rushed through the court into the forest.

It was a few days after this conversation that the inmates of Barbican sate together at dinner. Sir Richard was in an unusually good humour. Letters had come from Launoi at Leyden, together with other news from the Netherlands; and although the Duchess was graver than

usual, and at first seemed lost in thought, yet she soon passed from this to gayer topics with striking vivacity and apparent satisfaction. Peregrine, however, watched her narrowly; a doubtful distrust of this gaiety was stirring in him. The unequal vehemence of her speech; the louder laugh than was customary with her delicate manners; the heightened colour of her cheeks; certain hasty glances of forced indifference that she cast at him and others,—nothing of all this escaped him, and he turned his eyes downwards upon his plate, growing more and more silent as his parents became more communicative.

A boy, the son of the cowherd at Barbican, who now came to the farther door of the passage, and mysteriously beckoned out one of the servants, seemed fortunately to interrupt this state of excitement. The important looks of the poor fellow, his awkward carriage, and his movements with hand and foot while he spoke, set all a laughing, and even the servants joined

in it. The one, who had received the message, presently came back to the table, carelessly holding in his hand a little ragged book in poor binding, and as his station was generally behind the Duchess' chair, he took the same place now, saying, "Here is the important prize which the boy found in the wood, just as Lord Willoughby rode by him, and which, he imagines, will gain him a great reward. He saw the book drop from his Lordship's bosom, and cried out after him with the intention of immediately returning it, but, the horse flying quickly by, his exclamations were not heard."

"Show it to me," said the Duchess, taking the ill-looking volume with an air of neglect. "In the Latin tongue," she added, in a tone, as if it were above her, but immediately after the words escaped her lips unguardedly, "Heaven help me, Peregrine—a Catholic missal? How did you come by it?"

"A missal!" exclaimed Sir Richard, reddening with indignation. "I don't think there

can be such a thing in my house ; you have not seen rightly, Catherine ; you can not have seen rightly."

" Why not ?" said Peregrine, modestly. " It is not long since no other prayer-book was known here at Barbican, as being that acknowledged and recommended by the prevailing church, and I do not, on that account, think the worse of my ancestors. That, by which they edified, by which the Christian in general edifies, deserves at least to be known."

The father rose from his place at the table with a darkened brow.

" Lord Willoughby may, at his own peril, read whatever he pleases at Eresby, but here,—I repeat it,—here such things must not be."

He left the hall with hasty steps, and was heard slamming the doors after him indignantly, and hurrying to his own chamber.

Peregrine was afflicted by this untoward event, and sate for some time in silent consideration by his mother. It was difficult for

him to hit at once upon the right tone which might quickly clear up the mistake without any degrading explanations. Nor did his blood flow calmly; he was sensible of his error, but the harsh rebuke had deeply wounded him. Thus thoroughly distempered, he bit his lips without uttering a word, till at length all left the hall, and he was alone with his mother, when the Duchess asked gently, with her face half turned towards him, "Whence did you get the unlucky book? But this comes of your inquiries, which lead to nothing and only cause disputes and contradiction."

"Good God! is there any thing so terrible in my wishing to learn wherein we have essentially differed from the faith of our fathers, and what it is that forbids any longer a good intelligence between Christian and Christian? I am a Protestant and will remain one, but I can quietly endure the Catholic by my side."

"You are inclining to them," said his mother, with repressed grief; "that it is which

makes you so favourable in your judgment. But you are not so of yourself; others are concerned in it; you can not deceive me, and therefore, if you love me, say who gave you the book?"

"My dear mother," he replied, disquieted and grieved to be forced to leave her wish unsatisfied—"of what consequence is it to you how that came into my hands which you do not value, and which to you seems superfluous? I protest to you what I have learnt from it has not allured me nor made me waver in my faith, and what more, I beseech you, would you know of an accident that can have no other consequences?"

"No other consequences! Do you forget your father, or do you think to satisfy him as well as me by such specious arguments? Peregrine, your unfortunate propensity to dive into darkness and drag that which is hidden into daylight will ruin all yet."

"Fear not," said Perégrine, smiling with calm confidence, as if long ago possessed of the

secret which here is only hinted at, "What I am seeking to learn will not estrange your son from you, nor bring any evil upon the family. It cannot change me from what I am, good mother."

The Duchess eyed him keenly, and said; "Well, then, pursue your inquiries still farther; go on till you know all. I see you are a child of the time, in which you were born, restless, thirsting after the light, hot yet cold, eager yet with difficulty satisfied; you cannot stand still; Heaven grant that you may not repent your love of knowledge."

Peregrine rose, taking her hand in his and looking at her in doubt whether he should not open his heart to her and tell her all that troubled it, when Ralph came into the room with the words, "Guests! Guests of rank! A whole train of them is coming down the hill."

"Go my son," said the Duchess to Peregrine; "Appease your father, that no stranger's eye may see division betwixt you."

He pressed her hand gratefully to his lips, sighing, "My dear mother,—” and more was floating about his agitated mouth, but he knew not how to commence. The Duchess could restrain herself no longer; tears gushed down her cheeks; she wound her arms about his neck; and, overpowered by the emotions she had till now kept under, she sobbed, "My poor, poor Peregrine!"

Peregrine was alarmed; the blood stagnated upon his heart; he exclaimed anxiously! "Good Heavens, if——"

At this moment the doors flew open, and a lady entered leaning on Sir Richard's arm, who said significantly; "The Duchess of Suffolk, formerly Marchioness of Dorset."

"Francisca! You!" cried Catherine in alarm; when a meagre figure, vehement in looks and gestures, with a disagreeable redness in the face, and eyes almost closed in a perpetual laugh, rushed up to her, and embracing her in its withered arms with affected joy, ex-

claimed; "Your Grace has been as faithful to your family as your country; I see you know me again. Well, I trow, if ever kin ought to be kind, it is ourselves, for we have the same interest. Duchess, I bring you news that will assuredly fill your maternal heart with joy never felt before."

The Duchess was seized with that apprehension of something evil, which seemed inseparable from the presence of Francisca. She felt her cheeks grow pale, and said, with a trembling voice; "News which will affect me as a mother?"

"Even so," said the Marchioness, and, not allowing her an opportunity of farther reply, added, as she sunk into a chair as if overpowered by the importance of her tidings, "Jane! the rights of my murdered Jane revive!"

An unguarded cry of joy from the lips of Peregrine attracted his father's attention, who gazed at him in surprise, but Francisca cried with a joy, rendered still more extravagant by her vehe-

ment looks; "That tone? Let me hear that tone of joyful surprise again! It is a pledge for the fulfilment of my wishes. Upon you, upon you, young Sir, I will pour the golden gifts of this life, fortune, honour, and distinction. Oh, don't stare at me, Catherine, with that grave and lofty look, nor seem so much in wonder as if you did not know what was at the bottom of this. Hark, you; I am informed of all! Davis, the cunning Davis, once a servant of Northumberland's!—He disappeared when Warwick was executed, but at Portland your Grace met him again. You had then a child in your arms, a little girl, that you pretended to have found on the way. It was,—nay, do not play the hypocrite with me—Davis recognised it by its likeness to the poor Queen Jane, and, as a proof that his conjecture was right, there was the mark in the child's clothes, originally worked by Davis' own wife when Warwick sought to establish the fortune of his son. He possessed several pieces of plate from that period, whe-

ther justly or unjustly gotten, is not the question now, but you yourself discovered the rose-sprig which went round the coat of arms that had been picked out. You asked too very eagerly, how a silver cup had fallen into his hands, but that was not the time for discoveries of such a nature, and you crossed the sea, taking the child with you. At last the bloody sceptre of Mary drove away every thing without distinction that seemed suspicious to her. Davis fled to Germany, and subsequently he was in the Netherlands, where he remained till a few weeks ago. Sick, and begging in the extremity of distress, he stood a short time since before my door, and the sight of the arms of Dorset over it smote his conscience. He entered and, crouching at my feet, as is the manner of such people, he confessed that Lady Jane was secretly delivered of a daughter in the Tower, and, to withdraw the child from a dangerous persecution, had intrusted it to Davis' wife, who was at that time with her, with directions to place it in safety

out of England. The prudent woman dexterously concealed the intrusted pledge, till it was required from her, and made Davis believe it was dead ; but he always entertained great doubts of her assertion, and when he saw you in possession of the little girl, he extorted from the frightened woman the confession that she had been forced to give up the child to some one who had demanded her in my daughter's name, and she thought it probable that Lady Jane had intrusted her to you. Subsequently, Davis learnt in Flanders, where you then lived, that the lovely girl had grown up under your care, perfect, like her mother, in the charms both of mind and body. Every one had admired her beauty, till, on the sudden, the report of her death was spread abroad, though nobody saw a corpse carried out of your house, upon which there sprang up a tale of a grey spectre that was seen in the evening before St. Aldegonde's castle and that bore the little one from thence. You, Duchess, must best know who the grey

spectre was ; but I come to tell you, that, from the moment of Davis' confession, my mind found no rest, and incessantly endeavoured to learn whether the tale, which he might only have fabricated to induce me to give him an extravagant reward, did or did not rest on certain grounds. I inquired on all sides, and at last found, to my surprise, that in the prison at Tutbury, in the chamber of the captive Queen, they knew of this daughter of Jane's, and that the Catholics were endeavouring to discover her, to extort a composition from Elizabeth or hurl her from the throne. I conjure you, therefore, do not delay to direct me to my grand-child. Do not let others, and those the bitterest enemies of England, the Pope and his clergy, have a hand in this business. Look ! there is nothing in the world more easy than to marry your son with Jane's daughter. Lord Willoughby will make her rights his own ; the Dudleys are, of course, on our side ; they will be joined by all their kin ; the Suffolks cannot do otherwise,——"

"Hold, Francisca," exclaimed the Duchess, interrupting the torrent of her speech; "Whither are you driving? Would you, on the strength of a tale that a traitor invented to spur your wounded pride, would you for this set half England in an uproar? Who will answer to you for the word of this liar? Indeed, my good Francisca," she added with a forced laugh and constant change of colour; "indeed you are as ready as ever to listen to the influence of malcontents. Unhappy woman! has not enough blood been spilt yet? Would you drag to the block the credulous Lords, my son, and all whom you are seeking to involve?"

Francisca turned pale at the mention of these fearful incidents, while Peregrine stood on red-hot coals; his eager eyes seemed to swallow the words of his mother, who avoided looking at him; and Sir Richard, standing before the Marchioness, said firmly and calmly; "Do you not recognise the finger of the Catholics in the web which that runaway Davis has spun about you?"

Do you not see through the project? And can you really think that you have any claim to a foundling discovered and picked up by the Duchess in a little fishing village on the banks of the Thames? If you do, make your claims good as it pleases you, but leave us—and more particularly that young man—out of the question. The report,” he added, in some confusion, “has thus far concluded rightly; THE CHILD LIVES; but from causes importing only the Duchess and myself, the rumour of her death was spread abroad while she was educated in France and has since become the wife of Philip of Marnix, Count of Toulouse.”

A sudden dizziness, which seized Peregrine, drove the blood from his cheeks. Pale as death, and rolling his eyes wildly backwards and forwards, he staggered a few steps towards the door of the next room, but fell down senseless before he could reach it. The Duchess, who had followed every movement of his tortured soul with unspeakable agony, uttered a loud

shriek, but Sir Richard gently forcing her away from her son, near whom she was ready to sink, immediately called for help and bore him from the chamber.

From the very excess of her feelings, the Marchioness had witnessed all this in silence, showing only by the heightened colour of her cheeks the anger which was now to break loose. With a voice half stifled by wrath, she exclaimed; "This is well! Kill your only son too? Heap corse on corse that no traitor may bring your dark plots to light. But I—I will shriek it through the streets, that the daughter of Jane Grey, the great grand-child of Henry the Seventh, lives! that she has a right to the throne of England! And if the Lord of Toulouse is no weakling, like your Bertie, he will not hesitate to join me against Elizabeth. Farewell, hypocrite; I go to set all England in a blaze with my tidings."

"Francisca! by the ashes of your mother I conjure you, look well, before, by a single rash

step you destroy the innocent one whom you would benefit! You will never be able to make good your assertion, nor to bring witnesses of sufficient validity to overthrow the opposite party. The people and the state are not so easy to be won; you have no Warwick at your side, Lady; Elizabeth is the idol of England. The sparks, which you would scatter to work upon a few light heads, will never rise into a blaze but stifle yourself with their smoke. Hear me," she added, still more pressingly; "Bury Davis' unreasonable fable in your own breast, and be prudent, Francisca, if you would not be undone."

"Be prudent!" laughed the Marchioness; "Oh, my fair mother, you were so prudent, so cautious, reckoned so slyly, and the dull Bertie, in his rough vehemence, has torn the fine web with a single breath from his lips. She lives! The maiden, so long supposed dead, *lives*, and was hastily married to a stranger! This confession, to which nothing in the world com-

pelled you, has discovered all. Farewell, my prudent lady, we may soon hear of each other."

She was just on the point of going when she was stopped by one of her suite, in whom the equerry, already mentioned, might be discovered as much by his external beauty as his bold forwardness. He spoke softly with her, reproached her thoughtless violence, and, by his voice and look, evinced a power over her which compelled her to follow him immediately without any farther opposition. It seemed that Sir Richard had known how to appeal to his vanity and win him over to his interest on this dangerous occasion.

This visit had passed like a rushing storm through Castle Barbican.

CHAPTER X.

THE sympathy of care between son and parents had occasioned that silent understanding which rests upon mutual forbearance. Each read the other's heart, yet avoided the appearance of it; each gently removed out of the way whatever might disturb the other, and each as gently brought forward whatever might by kindness and mutual yielding link their hearts more closely. It is thus that the tumult of the mind is appeased, or we fancy we have appeased it, and rejoice in the quiet which after a youth of turmoil is so desirable in approaching age. But every violent emotion leaves some seed behind it, and how this secretly develops itself, what it destroys, or what it ripens,—of all this the artificial calm of the hour allows no external symptoms. Better that the pain should show itself without, that the feelings should gush

along in a living stream and should find a stop to its progress in the energies of the mind. Whatever turmoil there may be in such hours, life struggles against the opposition, and the passions more quickly subside into a calm. This, however, was not the case at Castle Barbican; Peregrine arose from the blow, which had threatened his utter ruin, and was silent; it seemed to him as if he had nothing more to learn or suffer in the world; his life lay revealed before him, and he subdued his rebellious heart sternly and resolvedly within his bosom. Once only he asked his mother, "Whether Rosa knew that she had been reported dead, and that he had so bitterly lamented her?" The tears, which filled his bright eyes as he spoke, melted the heart of the Duchess; she sank weeping on her son's breast, and he never asked again.

He now seldom visited the wood; books, too, which he had been used to study with so much interest, seemed no longer to have any charms

for him; they lay unopened and covered with dust. But he was so much the more frequently seen in London, where he kept his place modestly yet firmly, and gave a greater attention to the course of public events. Whoever had judged him by his pale looks, his melancholy eye, the earnestness and reserve on his thoughtful brow, his keen glance and mild speech, would have thought that he was only occupied by ambition and the desire of obtaining a voice in the Queen's council. His splendid dress, the beauty of his form, his southern complexion, the mysterious darkness of his expression, all seemed calculated to draw upon him the favourable notice of Elizabeth, and people fancied that they saw in him the future favourite and statesman. But there is nothing in which the multitude is so much mistaken as in the favour of princes. It is one thing with their pleasure in any merit, and another with its acknowledgment. Elizabeth, indeed, expected much from the youth who already knew how to conduct him-

self with such prudence and decisiveness, but still he was as a stranger to her; there was no social link, no interposing medium to fill up the space which divided the Queen from the subject. Peregrine did not seek it, and Elizabeth missed it, sometimes too with displeasure.

After many years spent in this way, the war-cry of the trumpet on a sudden tore the dark veil from his mind. New life came to him with the Queen's declaration that she, in conjunction with France, intended to assist the Netherlands, and he flew as if on the wings of the wind to Castle Barbican to bring the tidings to his father. Another fire burnt in his eyes, his brow was clear, every movement was quick and full of life; so he galloped into the court, so he hurried into the hall. His breast panted from his swift ride: he was unable at first to subdue its violent throbbing; voice and breath failed him; till, at last, he flung himself into Sir Richard's arms, more pale even than usual, exclaiming, "All is well now!"

Not understanding this unusual emotion in her son, the Duchess had hurried to them in great anxiety, but was very little calmed by the words, "War!—March!—To-morrow!"—But she subdued her own feelings, and gazing tenderly on the two objects of her affection, half whispered, as if to herself, "Shall we see each other again!" She was accustomed not to consider too narrowly either the foul or the fair in life. Experience had taught her to curb her fancy, and fix her eye on the immediate and the essential.

Never do the hours roll along more speedily than when they are bringing the moment of separation. It was evening, and none of them had observed the setting of the sun; but now, when the twilight drew in, and the room seemed more confined, and the converse grew more and more broken, and their hearts became more and more closely linked,—Oh, then there was an unspeakable sensation of doubt that weighed upon

their over-excited feelings. They could scarcely bear the silence of the room, till, at last, Sir Richard, going in and out, left mother and son alone. Perhaps the hour might never strike to both again! Words flowed on words, and things were talked of which else had not been called up from the oblivion of the past. But what it was the mother communicated to her son, or how he repaid confidence by confidence,—of this secret interview no one has ever penetrated the mystery. If, however, Peregrine learnt nothing new, yet, from this time forward, that which was already known to him assumed a milder shape. He saw clearly, and knew that he was understood by her whom he ever wished to entertain no doubts of him.

When Sir Richard after a time rejoined them, the Duchess said; “I now part from you in peace, for I am as sure of the hearts dearest to me as of my own. All, that is mysterious between those that love each other, must always

at last yield to some decisive moment, whether it be the last of life, or one which gives us a foreboding of that last."

She pressed her hands upon her eyes, unable any longer to conceal her increasing emotions, when Sir Richard said to her, with cheerful earnestness; "We both of us know the dangers and toils of life too well to consider them too lightly or too seriously; but, however it may be, we trust in God who never yet forsook us. I entertain great hopes from this long-expected campaign, and, I must confess, have little room for care or anxiety. It has ever been my warmest wish to assist Peregrine in his first essay of arms; and your noble heart, I am sure, Catherine, cannot beat with selfish grief at the moment when father and son are entering on the same career of honour. Besides," he added laughingly, "if bodements go for any thing, I can tell you, for your consolation, that our enterprise must end happily, for I never parted from you with so much confidence."

The Duchess suppressed a heavy sigh. She could not share in his gaiety, and the idea was constantly present to her that many a one went out joyfully who never returned. Her eye was mournfully fixed on the earth; no effort at mirth succeeded; no sport escaped her lips.

“Midnight is almost over,” said Sir Richard; “We’ll rest an hour or two, then breakfast together, and each will go about his business as usual.”

Catherine looked at him inquiringly; he answered by a friendly nod, but she shook her head and retired without any reply, however much her heart inclined her to it. “Is this the last time?” she murmured, yet, stifling the answer, she threw herself upon the bed, drew the curtains more closely about her, shut her eyes, and endeavoured to fancy that she wished for sleep. But as she lay there so lonely, and all about her grew stiller and stiller, the inward anxiety, as in former days, drove the blood upon her heart. She listened intently if

any sound might betray that which she avoided knowing, and yet which she would not let happen unknown. All, however, was still ; and at last her overwrought feelings gave way to weariness, and she fell asleep exhausted.

It was late when she awoke with throbbing pulse and in the terror of some hand pressing upon her heart ;—“ Sarah, Sarah !” she exclaimed, bending out of the bed, with her eye fixed anxiously on the door, but, when Sarah entered, she gazed on her without the courage to ask a question. After a pause she sunk back upon her pillow, saying, “ You may go again ; I know all now.”

“ That I could well imagine,” replied Sarah ; “ Such secret stealing away is after all of no use.—It deceives no one, this putting off leave-taking to avoid it altogether, and least of all your Grace, who is so experienced in all such transactions. +

“ It is really so, then ?” exclaimed Catherine, her eyes turned to heaven as if she had

hoped that it would have shamed her fear and surprised her yet once again with the sight of her beloved. "Hard, selfish men! When did they set out, Sarah?"

"But a short time since," was the answer; "though, from the moment day broke, they could not get off fast enough. The horses had long ago been led to the enclosure that you might not be disturbed by the clatter of their hoofs; but the more haste the less speed; there were a hundred things to do, to say, and not to say, for the heart too had its work and suppressed many a hasty ebullition in its rising. But no one has shed so many tears to-day as old Ralph. He sits without there on the great curb-stone with folded hands, his wet eyes fixed on the road which the travellers took, and as I lately passed him cried out to me; "All is vanity, Miss Sarah; all is vanity; virtue, beauty, and even wine, Miss Sarah. But fidelity, that still is something, for it breaks an honest fellow's heart."

"Poor Ralph!" sighed the Duchess, gently chiming in with his complaint; "He is in the right; but he should do as I do, Sarah; he should rejoice that those are happy whom we love."

"Do you, indeed rejoice?" said Sarah, more peevish than troubled: "there has long been an end of all mirth in this castle! for what has been the general course of things since our return home? We have, in truth, had a quiet comfortable time; but you must allow that there has not exactly been any thing like mirth with us; up to the great day when the Queen was here, and did so much honour to Sir Richard, he never has been able to reconcile himself to his not being a Duke like your former husband. The furrows on his brow have continued to grow deeper and deeper, and to show more and more of inward discontent. Trust me, the circumstance of his not being noble as your kin is the worm that gnaws his heart."

"You talk at random," said Catherine,

shaking her head, and "that which any one else would scarcely presume to think."

"Ah, my dear mistress," replied Sarah, "in reality you think as I do. Sir Richard has already fought at Havre and Dieppe for a coronet, and all your present distress comes from his anxiety not to injure his hopes with the Queen. Hence the removal of the poor child, and the sorrow that gives our young Lord the appearance of a monk."

"Of a monk!" exclaimed the Duchess in displeasure: "truly, you must have looked but little at my son, if he reminds you of that withered creeping race that spit fire and poison and sacrificed half England to their madness."

"You are never more warm," said Sarah laughing, "than when you speak of these unlucky beings, who are now paid back again all they did against us when in power. Your son thinks otherwise; he does not hate the monks as you do; nay, the shepherd's boy says that he has often seen him conversing with a spirit in

the wood, who is probably no other than a concealed Catholic, for they lurk in every corner. That's well known, though the people pretend not to see it; many because they secretly adhere to them; others, because they do not wish to revive the old cruelties. In Lord Willoughby both causes may, perhaps, be united, for certainly he has much in him of your Spanish relations, and yet is as good an Englishman as any one."

"You wish," said the Duchess, good-humouredly, "to atone by the conclusion for your fancied offence in a reference to the Catholic maternal country. But let it be, child; you know that I no longer contest your opinions; they have become too fixed; and, in regard to Sir Richard, too deeply rooted to be ever extirpated. I have told you, innumerable times, that the ambition, which you ascribe to my husband, like every other reproach with which you assail him, springs from your mortified pride, in that you must serve in the house

of a poor knight; and, when you attribute to him that he only fought for a coronet, your censure proceeds from vexation, in his not having really gained it, and so fulfilled the constant object of your dreams."

"It may be," said Sarah, after a moment's thought, "that it seems with me as you say; but ambition for ambition is all fair. I discovered the whole measure of it in the enamoured Sir Richard Bertie long before you suspected such a thing."

"Tell me, girl," exclaimed the Duchess, impatiently—"what is it makes you speak ill of him whom my heart calls back with a thousand voices? Do you think to lessen my pain by exciting my indignation?"

"I had no such object in what I said," replied Sarah, sitting down near her mistress' bed, "but it vexed me to see you, at your time of life, left behind thus widowed when it might have been otherwise. Good Heavens! Have we plagued ourselves day and night with the

helpless child, endured care and opposition without end, only for others to reap the fruit of our labours? Would it not have done you good to see the maiden sitting on your bed, weeping with you, while you talked with her of the absent Peregrine and united their loving hearts still more closely in this short separation?"

"Stop! Stop!" exclaimed the Duchess,—
"You only torture me, and are as far from piercing the mystery of these things as you are premature in your declarations."

"Far!" re-echoed the old confidante; "Not so far as you imagine, I assure you. Do you think I did not recognise the grey shadow which used at night to steal through the walls of St. Aldegonde's, one knew not how, and disappear, one knew not whither? It is the pale spirit that hovers over the grave of Lady Jane,—the angel of death, that waves its grey wings at midnight and anxiously flutters round it—Ah, your Grace, who knows not Hastings?"

“No more, I beseech you,” interrupted Catherine. “You know not what you say, or what mischief one of your words, wrongly taken up and unfairly applied, might bring upon us all.”

“This fear does not emanate from your own breast,” said Sarah, confidently. “You are as bold as candid, and this concealment is not natural to you. More than once the mystery has floated on your lips towards your son, and that which kept back your words was an useless care, for your secret is known or suspected by many more sly heads than would be pleasing to you. Gilles Boissy, ——”

“All of you,” said the Duchess, decidedly, “know as good as nothing; and as to your suspicions, they are so incongruous, so ill-connected, that none would think of building on them. In regard to Gilles, he is a runaway, whom I cannot fear.”

“He returned to the old faith, and is said to be in the service of the Scottish Queen.”

“I know it, but it is indifferent to me how

he settles these matters with himself. "And now, I pray you, let this be the last time that we speak on this disagreeable subject."

"The last time! Yes, truly, if it depended on ourselves. But you forget that the war draws our young Lord to the Netherlands, that the fortune of arms throws those who trust to it, now forward, now backward, and brings together men in a way that no foresight can calculate upon."

"Even so do you forget that Rosa is Countess of Toulouse, and that Philip will not venture his wife in the whirlpool of these wild times. As far as I have heard, she stays in the court of Queen Margaret, while the Count fights under Nassau."

"You may dispose and regulate many things with prudence and caution, but the event is not in your hand. Rely upon it, those, who have once loved, are sure to be brought together by fate, though you interpose seas and mountains."

“ If it should happen, I am not then to be blamed. There must, indeed, always be a moment that will bring the hidden into light, but let us hope it is, in this case, yet far off. Do you, too, hope the same, Sarah ; or at least let not your fear be again added to my other sorrows.”

Sarah shook her head, and left the room, dissatisfied.

CHAPTER XI.

“ LONELY ! ” said the Duchess, as she leant back, thoughtfully, in her arm-chair—“ You are right, Sarah ; the winter of our life is lonely.”

Her eye fell upon her own portrait that looked down upon her in the full splendour of beauty, bright and youthful from the spring of almost-forgotten days. She was painted as the bride of the powerful Duke of Suffolk. In her large, clear eyes was reflected a calm and tender heart, that surrendered itself without disquiet, and beat with cheerful confidence to meet the new relations of life.

“ How much,” exclaimed the Duchess, lost in thought, “ how much does such a maiden expect from herself and the world ? One sees then nothing but youth—always youth—and whatever form it may take, whither gay or sad, it is at

all times sweet to run it through in the dreams of imagination. How much, in the May of life, do the painful forebodings of a darker evening awake in the girlish heart! How fearfully, and yet how sweetly, are we then attracted by the pale images on the skirts of Heaven! All, even death itself, has life for the warm heart! A happy girl like that knows nothing of the barrenness of age, of its dull incapability of excitement, of its wavering imagination that can retain no fixed hope, or of all the unpleasantness that arises from the dismemberment of our feelings."

"And just as little do you know of it," said Sarah, always inclined to contradiction. "You place yourself before the dulled mirror of a sick or troubled soul, which complains rather where it has too *much* than too *little*. You would like to share the fame, the glory, and the honour of your son and husband, to follow both as you did before step by step, to see Peregrine by the side of Orange, as he describes himself in his letters,

to perceive the overflowings of his full heart, more closely than in a few hurried lines. Oh, trust me, your Grace has still too susceptible a heart in your bosom, and with so much sympathy are not inclined to look on inactively.

“ Ah, Sarah, this dull war of sieges! how it is protracted! Where is an end to be seen to it? And let me speak it plainly—it was only in the interval, when Alba, being recalled, left the government to Don John of Austria, when the misunderstanding of the two brothers filled the jealous heart of Philip with suspicion, when the Spanish soldier wanted pay and whole regiments renounced the service,—it was only then that the Netherlanders lifted up their heads; but since grief and vexation have killed Don John, and the fiery Parma has taken his place, though fame and honour may still be gained by the individual, there is little success to be expected from the war in general. Suppose that Orange falls; his life has already been twice attempted by murderous hands, and that,

which failed twice, may be sooner or later crowned with a more bloody consequence."

"How strangely you look at things to-day! But you should not confine yourself so within these dark old walls; here you feel what is wanting to you; in London, at the Queen's court,——"

"Heaven forbid! What should I do in London? There I have been long ago forgotten. He, who does not show himself at court daily, only gives the memory the unpleasant trouble of renewing a faded image.—*Custom* is the living element through which the courtier is what he is. He, who can not gain firm footing by a perpetual re-appearance, let him remain far away from the crowd in which he would be lost. Elizabeth is my Queen, yet there are few points of contact between us. What is said, Sarah, of the regions from the foot of the mountain to its summit? The air is best which blows between the two extremes. No; leave me in my solitude; it

protects me at least from the many false reports, invented by idleness for the torture of the timid. Here I enjoy one comfort, *repose*, and the value of that rises in our estimation when we have learnt to fear life, and every novelty becomes a disturbance."

She had scarcely uttered the last words, when a stranger was announced, who, as Ralph said, was vehement in his desire of an interview, on which account he had hitherto refused him admittance into the castle.

"How!" cried the Duchess—"A traveller,—a guest stands before the bolted gate of Barbican, and you do not open it to admit him? Quick, Partridge; bring the man, whoever he may be, into the hall without delay; I will come down directly to receive him."

"Who is it, then?" asked Sarah, looking anxiously at her mistress. "Of what country, Ralph? Of what rank is he?"

"Why," replied the old servant, "he at least knows how to curse roundly in English, and,

by his outside, looks as like a soldier as one egg looks like another."

"A soldier!" exclaimed the Duchess with vivacity—"And you are still considering! Go, go and bring him in immediately."

"If he be from the army," said Sarah, "he does not deserve to be admitted; and, if not, what should we do in the castle with such a rough companion?"

"How absurdly you talk! Suppose it should be a mercenary, who has been wounded in the war and rendered unfit for service, and who now comes back to demand his reward and brings with him commissions from my husband and son?"

As she said this they had reached the door of the lower hall, when Sarah involuntarily caught her mistress by the arm, as if to hold her back; but the Duchess laughed at her timidity, and in the next moment faced the stranger, who hastened to greet her. He was a large, well-made man, of middle years, sharp foreign features,

a dark, uncertain look, and with over-done courtesy. Catherine involuntarily started back at the sight of him; her keen glance immediately discerned something incongruous in his appearance.

After the first greetings, the stranger broke out into a strange jargon, which mingled, in a peculiar way, imperfect English with scraps of French, and plainly enough discovered his country, so that he did not hesitate to present himself to the Duchess as a French captain. "He came," he said, "in company with some of his brethren in arms, who had long served in the Netherlands, to raise in England a troop of volunteers, bold and enterprising enough to fling provisions and ammunition into the distressed city, which was nearly sinking under the superiority of the besiegers."

Catherine measured the hurried speaker with a dissatisfied look; the unsuitableness of his

actions to his military garb, and the constraint it evidently laid upon him, did not escape her ; she asked, " What chance or what design am I to thank for the honour of your visit to Barbican Castle ? "

The Captain looked at her in surprise ; but immediately collecting himself, as if he only then understood what at first had appeared unintelligible to him, and casting a rapid glance at those about him, he said, " May I ask for a few minutes' private audience ? " — Sarah pressed more closely to her mistress ; Ralph, too, advanced a few paces, but the Duchess, with a look that would not let her inward feelings be discovered, gave the stranger a sign to follow her, replying, with great courtesy, " Although I have no idea of the nature of any mystery that can exist between us, yet I suppose, beforehand, that I shall hear nothing from you but what is pleasant. "

With this she went into the next room, the

door of which she left open, saying that "he might speak, for no one there would disturb them by unbecoming curiosity."

"I understand," exclaimed the Captain, "I have not been mistaken. You are as subtle as experienced in the great art of deceiving others when duty requires it. But to our business; you are now free to act. The relation in which Bishop Day stands to your son and immediately through him to you, the certainty we have received, through Gilles Boisse, that you were never entirely false to the Catholic faith,—all this is a pledge to us that, ——"

He paused. "Well," said Catherine, eagerly.

"That you will aid in an enterprize to which a powerful branch of your house has already lent its hand. The object is to free the Queen of Scotland, to bring back a whole people to the true Church, to check the madness of innovators, and to win for yourself the pardon of the Pope."

“ And how,” said the Duchess, “ am I to set about this ?”

“ Give up to us,” replied the other, “ the proofs which you have in your hands of the birth of the Countess of Toulouse, as the legitimate heiress to the throne of England. France, who now assists the Church’s enemies, will then turn its arms against them ; the Netherlands will fall ; and Elizabeth will be dethroned, or save herself by freeing the Scottish Queen. It will avail you little,” he continued, in a higher tone, mistaking the Duchess’ silence for indecision—“ it will avail you little to play the hypocrite with the world because you fear its censure. It is known,—and even Rome believes it,—that you only embraced the new doctrines from necessity, in compulsive obedience to your heretic husband. This report will soon set you at variance with the Protestants. You are ruined then ——”

“ Permit me,” interrupted Catherine, raising

her hand a little, as if to protect herself from an overwhelming superiority—"Permit me to consider this weighty matter more narrowly. This is not only a question of earthly crowns,—the heavenly one, according to your declaration, is also to be gained. Such a business requires deliberation ; and I am, as you well know, quite alone. Whatever I resolve, the act is mine, and I only have to answer for it. Allow me, therefore, a moment of recollection, and I will return to you as soon as my mind is made up."

"Not so," cried the stranger, crossing her as she seemed about to leave the room. "If you waver it is possible you may betray us. You must not from here till you have put those documents into my hands. Do not consider long, for ——"

He opened the window at her back, when suddenly a man stood at the opening, levelling a musket at her, with the most horrible distortion of his features. So wild was his appearance,

that she involuntarily pressed her hands before her eyes in terror.

"You see," continued the Captain, "how matters stand; quick, therefore, if you regard your life."

"Wretched adventurer!" cried the Duchess, elevating her voice, that Ralph might hear her in the next room—"Do you think to frighten me by jugglery of this sort? Fire!" she said to the man on the outside of the window;—"Fire! I may fall, but you are only the more certainly lost. But go—Fly, before a party of my servants, under the lead of that brave man in the ante-room, make your escape impossible. You seek to terrify me while I was only thinking of obliterating every trace of your folly. I gave you a hint to avoid the peril, but now I fear it is too late."

She had scarcely uttered the last word, when, quick as lightning, the room was filled with armed men, and the castle was surrounded amidst loud cries of "Murderers! Murderers!"

Ralph's suspicious watchfulness had quietly taken such measures that a single sign was sufficient to prevent the dreaded evil.

"Ha!" shouted the Captain, leaping out of the window after his companion—"this treachery I did not expect."

Shots fell right and left, a momentary uproar filled the castle-court, and a few chance balls were fired in the direction of the wood, when all again was still. The desperadoes had escaped. The Duchess lay exhausted in the arms of Sarah, who understood nothing of all the tumult, and, amidst tears and caresses, bitterly reproached her mistress for having exchanged a word with a leader of banditti, when it was so easy to tell by the villain's look whose child he was. Catherine smiled at the grumbling love of her old servant, and excused herself, as well as she could, for not having followed her advice. But she was as little able at the moment to recover herself as to unravel the mystery of the business. The rapid succession and blending

of events had almost deprived her of their consciousness.

She was still lost in thought, when a little leather pouch was brought to her, which one of the robbers, as the domestics called them, had lost in the scuffle. As the writings it contained were in French, and no one in the castle, except the Duchess, was able to decipher them, the whole prize was therefore brought to her under the idea that they might throw some light upon those who had just escaped. She accordingly loosened the little green ribbon which was carefully tied about the folded papers, and found several open letters, draughts, and memoranda on which the names of places and persons were noted as if for recollection, and amongst others, her own and that of Castle Barbican. It was not easy to make out the whole mystery from these papers, but thus much was evident ; the supposed captain was a Catholic ecclesiastic of Rheims, by name John Ballard, who had crossed the sea in the military

garb, accompanied by Savage, an officer in the Belgian army, with the view of freeing Mary Stuart. Many English of rank appeared to be involved in the conspiracy, and Bishop Day was amongst them.

The Duchess still held the pouch in her hand, after having replaced the papers in it. She for a long time weighed the matter with herself, then slowly and carefully packed up the important documents of treason, and in the same night, without saying a word of her discovery, sent off Ralph to Queen Elizabeth in London.

CHAPTER XII.

WHILE a blind bigotry was thus in secret trying to undermine the ground on which the new doctrines had gained a firm footing, their defenders, proved by long and painful opposition, had to fight their battles in Brabant and the Netherlands. Much had happened there which signified not only the downfall of the old but the shaping of the new. A firm union was concluded between the northern and eastern provinces, a state had grown out of the ruin and fermentation; Orange, the life of the whole, was acknowledged its head, and nothing now seemed to be able to dispute the rights of the tolerated people. But the youthful being, that outgrows itself, has ever a wavering greatness, which must find its balance or perish in the sickly interval between youth and manhood.

The bold Duke of Parma, as fiery as perse-

vering, was chosen to be a dam against this advancing flood. The wearying war of sieges, which he carried on against the most important places, brought back under his dominion one town after the other, and now his attempts were directed against Ghent and Antwerp. The last place alone could decide who was to be master of the Netherlands, and full of this conviction the Duke broke up with his troops from Dornick to march at once towards his goal. The Netherlanders laughed at this project, which seemed to be the romantic birth of a hot young brain. Antwerp's situation, covered by the Scheldt, and on the land-side by Ghent, Brussels, Mechlen, and Dendermonde, threatened entire destruction to the Spanish army, that was much decreased, and moreover imbittered and murmuring from the want of pay. Nevertheless the cautious Prince of Orange, awake to every thing, called together the heads of the union in his palace at Dort, and formed prudent plans to render every

advance of the besieger useless, and, when the Counts of Bergen and Keulenburg vehemently declared against the possibility of such advances, he replied laughingly, yet agreeing with their view of the matter, "I know well that the Spanish force must break before the strong walls of Antwerp, but on that very account our opposition must be so regulated that not only courage may shrink before it, but that it may even subdue perseverance. Parma has set his whole ambition on the conquest of the Netherlands. He has wisely considered his means and the importance of the undertaking. If he were to divide his army and blockade the city on both sides of the river he would soon see his impotence without reckoning the great number of ships required to bar the Scheld. He has, therefore, as you know, adopted the idea of starving out Antwerp, by taking the bastions along the river, increasing the fortifications on its banks, and then by the fall of the Brabantic

cities which are still in our hands. Through these measures he hopes to cut off all communication with the besiegers by land and water."

Here Orange paused, seeing impatience on the faces of his hearers, and waited in expectation of some reply, but, as all were silent, he continued—"It is *possible* that the bulwarks on the land side may totter, Ghent and Mechlen *may* fall."—Bergen started up from his seat, and others insisted that this *could not* happen. "It *may* happen," said Orange, "therefore it is my advice immediately to raze the great dam between Sanvilet and Lillo, that if there should be any occasion we may let out the waters of the Upper Scheld over the lower lands of Bergen, and so be able to open a way to the city for the Zealand ships through the flooded fields if the Scheld should be blocked up."

The Count of Hochstaaten immediately agreed to this proposition. Keulenburg and many others held it almost too great and far-fetched a project; Orange, however, carried through

his purpose, and it was resolved to communicate this plan to St. Aldegonde, who was the governor of Antwerp.

The Prince was looking round for some one equally capable of comprehending his project and of imparting it clearly to others, when his eye fell upon Peregrine, who had just then entered, and he exclaimed, "See! there comes Lord Willoughby? Is it a good or an evil hour that brings you here?"

"I fear an evil one," replied Peregrine; "I come to announce to your Highness the fall of the fort on the island of Doel. Count Risburg took it before it was put into a perfect state of defence, and the same fate threatens fort Lillo that lies opposite. Count Odet of Teligny has therefore sent me to request of your Highness a reinforcement. My regiment, and the Scots under Colonel Balfour, are considerably weakened, from England no fresh supplies come, and we need——"

"Truly," said Orange, interrupting him, "the

great Queen should do nothing by halves ; she should,—but we will not stand talking of what should be. You see,” he continued, turning to his friends, “ how important the execution of my project is for Antwerp. But now, my Lord, let us first drown all our cares in wine, and then I will tell you my intentions, upon which you will hasten to the prudent St. Aldegonde in Antwerp.”

A glow rushed over the cheeks of Peregrine at the name of Aldegonde, as with absent thoughts he obeyed the Prince's request to take a seat at his side. With visible anxiety he listened to all that was said in regard to the Lord of Marnix ; but the cheerful mood of the brave heroes around him soon scattered the clouds of his own imagination, and a conversation no less instructive than enlivening completely rivetted his attention.

“ Does not your father, my Lord, defend Ghent ?” said Knilenburg in the interval.

Peregrine replied in the affirmative, with the remark that this place too was near its fall.

“Your fancy,” said Count Bergen, “is of a very gloomy complexion. Methinks our views even in England did not particularly chime in with each other, and the same difference holds still with us.”

“Nevertheless, Count,” said Peregrine, “we go the same road, and I do not think you can say I lag behind you. If your fancy have rose-coloured wings, and mine grey ones, we both of us fly neither higher nor lower than we ought; and, therefore,—”

“And, therefore, no more about it,” interrupted the Prince, with the goblet in his hand. “In the bright stream of my country’s wine a peaceful eye and an unwrinkled brow are alone reflected. By Heavens!” he added, after having tasted it, “the growth of the Rhine affords a noble draught!”

He emptied the goblet and broke up the table,

never at any time extending the banquet beyond its proper limits.

“And now a few calm words,” he said, beckoning to his guests as he went before them towards the entrance of the hall, when he suddenly broke off and called out to a sallow-looking Frenchman, that crossed his way, “Aha, Guion, are you returned from Leyden? What is my son, Maurice, doing? Does he get on well? I think,” he added, turning his head round to his friends, “Launoi will make something excellent of him.”

The report of a pistol, the fall of the Prince at full length, and a cry of horror from every lip, were the answer to these mild paternal words, the last that ever flowed from the lips of the wise hero.

“Fiend!” shouted Bergen, catching the fugitive with the speed of an arrow, while Peregrine held the stark body in his arms, without well understanding what had passed, and without feeling a single emotion in his bosom.

“ Fiend ! ” cried all the by-standers to Guion, who struggled in desperation ; “ Who, who has hired you to this accursed deed ? Speak ! if your tongue be not paralyzed, or your blood turned to ice in horror of your very self.”

The unhappy man cast a dark and glowing look at Orange, upon which a dreadful shuddering seized him, his teeth chattered violently, he became pale as death, and he stammered out with blue trembling lips, “ God will judge the deed ! I am innocent ! The Franciscan, GERALDI of Tournay, has given me absolution for it.”

With difficulty HOCHSTAATEN rescued the wretched man from the naked swords that were flourished against him, saying, “ Leave him untouched ! Do not stain your weapons with the blood of a murderer ! Let him die the death of a criminal by the hand of justice ! ”

“ For years,” said an old servant, lamenting and wringing his hands ; “ for years has this Guion looked at your beloved face, waited on you, possessed your confidence, and—Heavens,

what a world is this, when such goodness cannot subdue the Devil !”

Peregrine had laid the dead body down on cushions, as dumb and almost as stark as the corpse itself, and he remained standing by it without motion. He had seen thousands fall in battle, but here it seemed to him as if he had never looked on the dead before. An unnatural horror at last convulsed his whole frame, and, stretching both hands before his face, he exclaimed in a hollow voice, “ Murdered !”

“ This blow,” said a voice near him, “ was only wanting. With him has fallen the heart which animated the body of our republic, so laboriously put together. Take heed, the limbs will gradually fall off; Antwerp, too, will,—”

Peregrine looked up. It was Hochstaaten who thoughtfully weighed their danger, and he immediately interrupted him with, “ Antwerp! Heavens! The Prince’s very last commission sends me thither. Farewell, therefore, Count, I have not a moment longer to delay.”

“ You too are going,” said Hochstaaten in emotion ; “ the wild hour tears his friends away from his corpse. They fly hither and thither, for his spirit yet animates all ! But who, like him, will be able to keep them united ? ”

“ Eternal Providence,” cried Peregrine, raising his dark expressive eye to Heaven ; “ eternal Providence will find a hand able to seize the right thread in this entangled yarn.”

His heart had never been more painfully agitated than now upon his leaving the palace of Dort. It seemed to him as if he were wandering in dark night, although it was full mid-day.

“ I did not think this,” he said to himself, as he lingered at the door of the building ; “ I did not think this ; but, indeed, how little for the most part does man think that is true ! All, all here is shadow and dream, and on the other side is the hour of waking ! ”

His youthful heart was ready to burst in the parting look at the Prince’s window. He leaned

his head against the lower breast-work, and wept violently, when a light hand tapped his shoulder. He started in confusion, and looking up, saw before him a man about the age of Orange, whom he did not remember having ever seen before. There was something dignified in his mien that inspired respect, and, as a Knight of the Fleece, rich and nobly clad, it was impossible to mistake in him the man of rank. He addressed Peregrine politely ;

“ Do you wish to travel alone, or would you like the society of a companion? My road leads me precisely in the same direction, and if you have nothing more to do here, let us hasten to quit the house of crime and sorrow.”

Peregrine assented to his proposal by a silent bow, although more from courtesy in the first surprise than from choice; and, indeed, there was but little time for him to adopt any other resolution, for his own horse as well as that of the stranger was in the fore-court. The latter, without more words, mounted his steed, and

halted by the side of Peregrine, waiting till he was ready.

They had gone a considerable way in silence by each other, when the Knight of the Fleece said; "It will little help you to impart a project to St. Aldegonde, which for its execution depends on the will of the burghers, and never, I can promise you, will they be capable of the bold idea of a momentary sacrifice. They would rather put their life to the hazard in the hope of its remaining unindangered than voluntarily renounce the possession of an acre of land."

"It might be so," replied Peregrine, "if the words of the mouth, now closed for ever, were not a sort of testament. I should think the wish of Orange must be sacred with the Brabanters."

"You judge by your own feelings," replied the knight. "Those men are much colder than you imagine to yourself, and only that which immediately touches them has any influence with them."

Peregrine attentively considered the stranger as he spoke; his head hung down a little, as if looking to his horse; his face bore the marks of a calm, unruffled mind. Upon his brow were thought and gravity, about his mouth was a something stern, as if the guardian of his tongue and lips, and these were evidently under the control of a will that seemed regulated by experience and decision. Few words past between them, nor could Peregrine comprehend why so silent a companion could have desired his society.

On the third day of their mutual journey he ventured to ask the knight, "If business were carrying him to Antwerp, or if he belonged to the garrison there?" The answer was, that "The defence of Dendermonde, which had devolved to him, took him that way."

"How?" exclaimed Peregrine. "Dendermonde, too, threatened?"

"I tell you," replied the knight, "that all

Brabant and Flanders are threatened by this Parma."

The important affairs of the time led the conversation more and more upon this subject, and Peregrine soon found that he was speaking with a proved statesman and warrior. Intent upon every word, he did not suffer a single one to escape him that might give him any light into the state of things. As he listened, he had involuntarily forgotten himself and his immediate personal relation to the stranger, when suddenly it occurred to him that it was singular he did not even know the name of the person who had such a title to his admiration. The question hovered upon his lips, but the fear of seeming importunate, and still more an unconquerable bashfulness, made him refrain from his intention.

They had now come to a cross-road, when the knight said, "Here our ways divide. Your fate at Fort Lillo will soon be decided. If you

beat back the enemy you drive him upon us, and if the fort falls the danger of Antwerp is increased; so that one way or the other we stand or fall together. Perhaps the chance of war may soon occasion our meeting. I am John of Marnix, Count of Toulouse," he added, guiding off his horse and inclining his hand towards him in parting salutation.

"The Count of Toulouse!" re-echoed Peregrine, halting, and looking with fixed gaze after the horseman, who hastily rode off.—
"And he did not even ask my name! Without doubt he knew me!—Rosa! Rosa! And not a word of you!"

Slowly he approached Antwerp. What he there learnt, and what the multiplied events of that busy time brought with them, swallowed up this impression as well as many others of an earlier date.

CHAPTER XIII.

No cheerful guest for a long time had been seen to enter the deserted court-yard of Castle Barbican. All was still there. Ralph, indeed, crept about now and then, seated himself upon the large white stone near the road, and with sick heart and sick eye looked abroad without an immediate object.

It was on a warm spring evening that ennui and the call of revived nature again drove him to his old post. The moon rose full and glowingly above the forest; the nightingale sang sweetly by the waters, on the elder and rose bush; the frogs were stirring in the pond; and Ralph was thinking of happier days, and how often the change of seasons had greeted him in the same way, when he was joined by a traveller, whom he had seen for some time descending the

hill and crossing the footpath through the meadow. He answered the stranger's salutation carelessly, adding, "Whence, friend?"

"From afar," was the reply. The voice sounded faintly.

"From afar!" re-echoed Ralph. "Rest here then and get strength for the remainder of your journey. You will indeed rest upon the sill of a house of mourning."

"A house of mourning!" said the traveller, hastily. "Who has died within these walls?"

"No one precisely within these walls; but though the body be buried on the other side of the water, the soul was here, and that has taken another soul with it, so that all with us dead and desolate."

"What do you mean by that, I pray you?" said the stranger.

"Ah!" sighed Partridge, "it is a long tale to tell. If you had known Sir Richard Bertie, why then, indeed;—but as it is ——"

“ I did know him—know him well !” replied the traveller.

“ Then, perhaps, you are acquainted with his adventures ?” exclaimed Ralph.

The stranger nodded in the affirmative, and Ralph went on, “ they were of a singular nature ;—first exiled ; then recalled ; and now a voluntary exile. He might have ended his life so quietly too, and had not the least occasion to be stretched dead at Ghent by the shot of the infernal besiegers.”

“ Your master fell at Ghent, then ?” said the stranger.

“ He did,” replied Ralph, “ but his death had this good with it ; he did not live to see the surrender ; for the city we may well say has surrendered, since it bought itself off with a heavy fine. It was not so with Fort Lillo and the brave Dendermonde ! The son avenged his father’s death, I can assure you that.”

“ The son lives then ?” said the stranger.

“ He does,” said Ralph, “ though it is a ticklish thing to answer such a question with yes, for the hours change there like rain and sunshine on an April day.”

“ And how does the Duchess bear this new sorrow ?” exclaimed the stranger, after a long pause of silence.

“ As she bears every thing,—firm, resigned; nay, I might say great, as her whole life has been. There above, where you see the pale glimmer of the lamp shining through the curtains, she sits alone in the corner of a large room, hung with black. Long, widow’s weeds veil her majestic figure, and she reads in pious books, edifying herself and the grumbling Sarah, who cannot bear the change of life. In truth, he who sees this, and can recollect the days when she looked out into the world bright as the sun, while her eye had a splendour that made every other sink before it, and joy with fortune followed her steps!—Oh, if such a one sets too

high a value on this life below the moon, he must have a great faith in infidelity."

"Could I not speak with the Duchess for a moment?" said the stranger, after a long pause, in which he looked upon the ground before him.

"Perhaps you bring her a message from Lord Willoughby?" answered Ralph, eyeing him inquiringly. "He has still a claim upon her sympathy, or else her grief for the poor Sir Richard is much too recent and too lively for her to think of other things."

"I do not come from Flanders; but I am on the way to Burgundy and had many things to tell your Lady," replied the wanderer.

"Humph!" muttered Ralph, half aloud. "It is late now, and we go to bed with the birds. My old eyes are no longer able to see by candle-light, and, if I could, what should I see in bare walls or in books, which don't contain half such curious things as I have gone

through? When it grows too cold here under the trees I try to go to sleep, and do you follow my example. So come in; Castle Barbican is the same hospitable house as ever, giving a willing refuge to the traveller; and when you are refreshed in the morning you can pay your visit to the Duchess."

"I prefer travelling by night," said the stranger, in a low tone, and somewhat confused.

"So! so!" retorted Ralph, as if he suspected which way the wind blew; "you prefer travelling by night! Then I would advise you to take up your staff again, for, as I said before, we sleep by night."

"Partridge! honest Partridge!" cried a voice, which on the sudden sounded quite familiar to his ear—"Is it possible that you absolutely do not recognise me?"

As the stranger spoke he raised his head and turned his face so that the moon poured its full light on the pale and worn features of Gilles

Boissy, who stood before him with a melancholy smile.

“ Gilles !” exclaimed Partridge, starting up.
“ Heaven deliver us ! What would you here ? Have you, too, a design against her Grace’s life, like your Catholic brother, that you set upon us a few months since ? Go ! I advise you, for the sake of old companionship, go !”

“ Ah, Ralph !” sighed Gilles, taking the indignant old man by the hand—“ I am a very unhappy being ! If you knew how wretched I am, what tortures my soul endures, you would not turn your back upon me as if I were a contemptible beggar.”

“ Smooth words,” retorted the old man, shaking his head—“ lies invented by the devil, with which you think to snare the dull, simple Ralph. Wretched ! Why the deuce are you so ? Had not you the best place in the world ? good wages, and plenty of drink ? Zounds, who bade you steal away like a cat from a dove-cot ?

Didn't you leave us one morning without a word, when we were in that infernal castle on the Dutch coast, where all was going cross with us? And since then have you ever let us hear any thing of you but to our vexation?"

"You are quite right," replied Gilles. "I can say nothing in answer to your reproaches, but that I was as if torn by two horses, divided into two parts, and so dragged along the ground. If you feel no pity for me, I have, in truth, no claims upon your justice."

"What sort of talk is this?" said Partridge, already a little more inclined towards him. "In two halves! Why so? An honest fellow is always *one whole*, or else he becomes half a rascal."

"My heart loved the heretics, Ralph; but my tortured soul condemned them,—still does condemn them. Could I help that my faith would not remain your faith? I have suffered pain enough on that score; and, if it were so, was I any longer to oppose those who had the

peace of this tortured soul in their hands? My mother served the Scottish Queen. The powerful Granvella, who had just then returned to Spain, had me taken up by his spies and brought to Madrid, and it was only by blind obedience that I could expiate my offence in having so long served a heretic. My heart was dead; I did as they ordered me; the long years have past away in perpetual wanderings, and I have often been for months in England. Here in the wood died my mother, when they separated her from Mary and exposed her to all the miseries of helpless age. A poor Catholic took pity upon her; with him she found a refuge, and, owing to the secret understanding which he had with the banished priests, she found, too, the comforts of a religion to which her whole life was devoted. Day, too, the once so dreaded Bishop Day, led a hermit's life under the shelter of these trees. I have just visited his grave, which, poor and humble as it is, has yet been dug by the hands of devoted love, and now encloses that restless,

active spirit, which formed such great plans for the deliverance of the Scottish Queen, and through them plunged so many unfortunate beings into destruction. The old inhabitant of the forest, who led me to the humble hillock, and wetted it with his scalding tears, can not get over the loss of a man for whose destruction a thousand hands had taken up the sword, if his retreat had ever been discovered. Such experiences, my old comrade, make the heart tender, and the mind gentle and apt to kindness. I refrain from all judgment, but I could not part from this land without again seeing Barbican, and obtaining forgiveness at her Grace's feet."

"Done!" cried Partridge, shaking his hand warmly—"That you shall—Come; only come. What the deuce! One must not let the sun go down upon one's wrath. And who knows? the sun of our life may set before any of us expect of it. Come; I understand but little of your subtleties, your perversions and your tricking

system of lies ; but the times are so confused, that one does not know who is cook and who is butler. By-the-by, talking of butlers, I hold that office here, and can put some wine before you that will make you forget your Catholic conundrums."

Ralph set about re-baptising his old enmity in old wine and converting it to young friendship, and both sent the golden lights of fancy through the gloomy present ; the little chamber on the ground-floor, which was formerly Gilles', now united them again, as it had been wont to do ; the long, long time, that lay behind them, was absorbed in the moment, and one word brought on another, as if there existed nothing to check the free tide of sympathy ; while above, in a dark chamber, sate the Duchess, her head leaning on her hand, and unable to comprehend how she had struggled through this weary life, and often with gaiety and happiness. There are hours when only sorrow seems to have a

right to our recollection,—the shadows blend altogether, the light vanishes, and the soul finds itself in itself.”

“ My good Sarah,” said the Duchess, beckoning her old confidante, “ give me the melancholy letter once again. You know I like to read it before I go to bed. That ONE thought is so constantly with me from the time I open my eyes till the time I close them !”

“ The poor eyes !” exclaimed Sarah, in a tone of angry pity—“ will you exhaust them so much that you will no more be able to use them ? And why should you read these few lines that you know by heart ? In truth, I myself am so intimate with them that I should miss a single syllable if it were omitted.”

“ Then I need so much the less to strain my eyes,” said the Duchess. “ I rather read the traces of the beloved hand than the words. They are the character of my son in an hour of deep emotion. It seems to me as if I saw the firm strokes gliding and blending with each

other—the strong mind of the warrior, of the ripened man, struggling to regain its equanimity,—his eyes overflowing, his heart still bleeding. Ah, Sarah, Peregrine conceals from me what he suffers—his father's death has struck him with unwonted heaviness. We do not think of that which we have not felt. Mortality is ever strange to the living.”

“ Our Peregrine is a kind loving creature,” said Sarah, meditating upon the letter. “ How tenderly he thinks of you,—only of you,—and endeavours to raise your spirits by the thought that his father fell in defence of his post, and even upon his shield. And then immediately after what he himself speaks of the fight, how they defended the place and beat back the enemy !”

“ Indeed ! Indeed !” exclaimed the Duchess smiling, as if she saw her hero in the fire of the battle. But in the next moment a mist came over her eyes, as she said, “ but what awaits him now at Antwerp ? He himself forbodes greater danger than the generality of his com-

panions, and declares it will avail them little that the enterprising Gianibelli destroyed the bridge of boats which the Duke erected between Kallo and Ordam under the cannon of the fortress and protected by two mighty batteries. The bridge was blown up by a skilful contrivance, and the Duke, who stood near, was beaten from his horse by the explosion; all seemed lost; and yet,—the bridge is restored, because those in Antwerp as little opposed it as they inclined in another instance to fulfil the last will of Orange. The city, he says, will fall as Dendermonde and Ghent did.—Yes, it will fall!” added the Duchess; “and how many with it!”

She was occupied by these and similar thoughts, when Ralph entered the room with a cheerful face, and without much circumlocation announced his former companion Gilles to the Duchess, who was startled at the idea of again seeing a man disagreeable to her from so many different motives. A refusal was already upon

her lips, but she checked herself and, suffering her native goodness to get the mastery, said, "Where is he then, Ralph? And what does the unhappy man want!"

"Your forgiveness!" exclaimed Gilles, rushing in and flinging himself at her feet before she was aware of his presence. "Oh, Heavens! To find you thus! so lonely! so desolate!"

Tears poured down his cheeks as he pressed to his lips the hem of her mourning garment.

"Gilles!" said the Duchess, after a brief silence; "how am I to reconcile this emotion with your constant endeavours to bring trouble upon this house and to sow distrust in the heart of my son?"

"Ask not," cried Gilles; "inquire not—all powerful is the bidding of the church. God willed that I should chance upon your son, and I held it for a token from Heaven that I should try to win him over to the old faith. His strong affection for,——"

“ Silence upon that,” said the Duchess; “ tell me rather what brings you to me now ?”

“ John Ballard, and Savage, with Babington and many others, are arrested and imprisoned, and they will not fail to hunt me out too ; therefore I leave England for ever. But give me your blessing, I entreat you ; your blessing before I die.”

“ Yonder,” replied Catherine, pointing up to Heaven—“ yonder, Gilles, exists no strife of opinions. *There* is peace, and *there* we shall meet again ; God guide us thither !”

She gave him her hand, which he covered with kisses, and sobbing loudly hurried from the chamber.

“ Peace !” sighed the Duchess ; “ who will find it here on earth ?”

It was, however, more close to her than she imagined. Antwerp, in spite of the bravest defence, was surrendered upon terms, and the zeal of the allies seemed for a moment to be damped. Elizabeth withdrew her troops ; Pere-

grine, the adored hero of the army, the idol of the people, returned with them to England. The Queen had created him her general and loaded him with praises; but, although he felt the value of her favour, yet the cloud, which had before covered his brow, now lay upon it more darkly than ever. No one knew the occasion of his melancholy. He avoided the court, and subsequently accepted the situation of Governor of Berwick, whither he was accompanied by his mother.

Many years afterwards he married a French lady, in regard to whose rank and race opinions were far from being unanimous. Some pretended to recollect, that in a sally from Antwerp he fought by the side of the Count of Toulouse, whom he bore out of the throng heavily wounded, after having gained fort Mary. When the fort was again lost and Antwerp itself surrendered, with permission however of a free retreat to the garrison, Lord Willoughby, according to this tale, had accompanied the wounded Count to a

near castle on the coast. It was night when they arrived ; and a figure, as if woven of the air, floated towards them in the arched entrance of the hall, while the glimmer of a half-extinguished lamp fell on her fair face. Peregrine murmured in surprise—" Rosa! Was it all a dream? Are we yet at St. Aldegonde's? Did I never lose you?" She signed to him to be silent and gave him her trembling hand without uttering a word. The sick man pressed both their hands in his. Peregrine stood awhile as if petrified, and then finally tore himself away.

The circumstance of Lady Willoughby also being called Rosa and of the Count of Toulouse dying of his wounds, made many believe that she had been the lady of the castle. But, however this might be, Peregrine could not have been happier with any other bride. In his son, who subsequently obtained the rank of a Count of Lindsay, the grandmother bloomed again, and in her later years was fond of re-

calling the story of her eventful life. Often, when the family was collected at Barbican, and she sate surrounded with them by the great fire-place in her chamber, she would talk with much vivacity of the days in Sion House, of the fair Jane, and what an unavoidable influence her death had exercised over the lives of many.

In such hours a guest would often associate himself with the inmates of Castle Barbican, whose country was never distinctly known. Some deemed him a Spanish monk, or outcast of the Netherlands; others saw in him a mysterious being, who was intimately mixed up with the fate of Lady Willoughby. Sarah and Ralph swore that they recognised Lord Hastings in him; and once when Essex, in the exuberance of his mirth, called him the gray spectre, that he remembered in the early scenes of Peregrine's life, the unknown guest retorted gravely, "Do you know the story of the little flower called nightshade? Its pale garment formerly

glittered with a thousand purple lights; it sparkled and shone proudly above all others, when a single drop of poison, sweltered by the mid-day heat from the dark vapour, fell into its open cup, and it was all over with its brilliance."

He was silent. The proud favourite might well have remembered this at a later period, when his haughty brow was shadowed about with the air of a dungeon and the shivering reek of death.

THE END.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

For your writing and reading, let that appear when there is
no need of such vanity—SHAKSPEARE.

*Catherine for answer, presented to him a new-born infant
carefully wrapt up in cloths and linen, saying, with a
faltering voice,—“ Let the boy be called Peregrine,
for he is a stranger in this rough land.”—p. 32.*

THESE adventures are not altogether a fiction; the
Duchess and her husband suffered so much during their
exile, that their story became the subject of an old ballad,
entitled, “THE MOST RARE AND EXCELLENT HISTORY
OF THE DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, AND HER HUSBAND
RICHARD BERTIE’S CALAMITIES. *To the tune of
Queen Dido.* Originally published in the reign of
Queen Elizabeth; reprinted in 1738, and again in
1806.”

VOL. II.

T

When God had taken for our sin
That prudent Prince King Edward away,
Then bloody Bonner did begin
His raging malice to bewray :
All those that did God's word profess
He persecuted more or less.

Thus while the Lord on us did lower,
Many in prison he did throw ;
Tormenting them in Lollard's Tower *,
Whereby they might the truth forego.
Then Cranmer, Ridley, and the rest,
Were burning in the fire, that Christ profess'd.

Smithfield was then with fagots fill'd,
And many places more beside ;
At Coventry was Saunders kill'd,
At Worcester eke good Hooper died ;
And to escape this bloody day
Beyond sea many fled away.

Among the rest that sought relief,
And for their faith in danger stood,
Lady Elizabeth was chief,
King Henry's daughter of royal blood,
Who in the Tower did prisoner lie,
Looking each day when she should die.

* There is a place so named, composing a part of the palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth.

The Duchess of Suffolk, seeing this,
Whose life likewise the tyrant sought,
Who, in the hopes of heavenly bliss,
Within God's Word her comfort sought ;
For fear of death was forc'd to fly,
And leave her house most secretly.

That for the love of God alone,
Her lands and goods she left behind ;
Seeking still that precious stone,
The Word and truth to save and find ;
She with her husband, nurse, and child,
In poor array their sights beguil'd.

Thus through London they pass'd along,
Each one did take a several street ;
And all along escaping wrong,
At Billingsgate they all did meet ;
Like people poor, in Gravesend barge,
They swiftly went with all their charge.

And all along from Gravesend town,
With journey short on foot they went,
Unto the sea-coast came they down,
To pass the seas was their intent ;
And God provided to that day
That they took ship and sail'd away,

And with a prosp'rous gale of wind
In Flanders they did safe arrive ;
This was to them great ease of mind,
And from their hearts much wo did drive ;
And so with thanks to God on high,
They took their way to Germany.

Thus, as they travell'd still disguised,
Upon the highway suddenly
By cruel thieves they were surpris'd,
Assaulting their small company ;
And all their treasure and their store
They took away and beat them sore.

The nurse, amidst of all their fright,
Laid down the child upon the ground ;
She ran away out of their sight,
And never after that was found.
Then did the Duchess make great moan
With her good husband all alone.

The thieves had then their horses killed,
And all their money quite had took ;
The pretty baby almost spoil'd,
Was by the nurse likewise forsook ;
And they far from their friends did stand,
And succourless in a strange land.

The sky likewise began to scowl,
It hail'd and rain'd in piteous sort ;
The way was long and wondrous foul ;
Then may I now full well report,
Their grief and sorrow were not small
When this unhappy chance did fall.

Sometimes the Duchess bore the child
As wet as she could be,
And when the lady, kind and mild,
Was weary, then the child bore he.
And thus they one another eas'd,
And with their fortunes seem'd well pleas'd.

And after many a weary step,
All wet-shod both in dirt and mire ;
After much grief their hearts yet leap,
For labour doth some rest require,
A town before them they did see,
But lodged there they could not be.

From house to house then they did go,
Seeking that night where they might lie ;
But want of money was their wo,
And still their babe with cold would cry ;
With cap and knee they court'sy make,
But none of them would pity take.

Lo! here a Princess of great blood
Doth pray a peasant for relief
With tears bedewed as she stood
Yet few or none regard her grief;
Her speech they could not understand,
But some gave money in her hand.

Whenall in vain her speed was spent,
And that they could not house-room get,
Into a church-porch then they went
To stand out of the rain and wet;
Then said the Duchess to her dear,
“ Oh, that we had some fire here !”

Then did her husband so provide,
That fire and coals they got with speed ;
She sate down by the fire-side
To dress her daughter that had need ;
And while she dress'd it in her lap
Her husband made the infant pap.

Anon, the sexton thither came,
And finding them there by the fire;
The drunken knave, all void of shame,
To drive them out was his desire;
And spurning out the noble dame,
Her husband's wrath he did inflame.

And all in fury as he stood,
He wrung the church keys from his hand,
And struck him so that all the blood
Ran down his head as he did stand;
Wherefore the sexton presently
For aid and help aloud did cry.

Then came the officers in haste
And took the Duchess and her child,
And with her husband thus they past
Like lambs beset with tigers wild;
And to the governor were brought,
Who understood them not in aught.

Then Master Bertie, brave and bold,
In Latin made a gallant speech,
Which all their miseries did unfold,
And their high favour did beseech.
With that a doctor, sitting by,
Did know the Duchess presently.

And, thereupon, arising straight,
With looks abased at the sight,
Unto them all that there did wait
He thus broke forth in words aright;
“Behold! within your sight,” quoth he,
“A Princess of most high degree;

With that the Governor and all the rest
Were much amazed the same to hear!
Who welcomed this new-come guest
With rev'rence great and princely cheer;
And afterwards convey'd they were
Unto their friend Prince Casimier.

A son she had in Germany,
Peregrine Bertie call'd by name,
Surnam'd the good Lord Willoughby,
Of courage great and worthy fame;
Her daughter young that with her went
Was afterwards Countess of Kent.

For when Queen Mary was deceased,
The Duchess home returned again;
Who was of sorrow quite releas'd
By Queen Elizabeth's happy reign;
Whose godly life and piety
We may praise continually.

The original of this ballad is to be found in the *Roxburgh Collection*, but I went no farther for it than *Bank's Dormant Peerage*. The ballad-maker, however, is not so historically correct as the novelist, who is quite right in stating that Sir Richard obtained relief by the means of two students whom he addressed in Latin.

Banks gives a *copy* of a curious inscription in the church at Wesel, which relates to Sir Richard's son Peregrine.

Anno D.M.D.L.V.XII. Octobris. In hoc Ecclesiæ Vesaliensis Propylæo natus est, ideoque appellatus Peregrinus, Bertie, Baro Willoughby de Eresby, in Regno Angliæ Domini Richardi Bertie et Catharinæ Ducissæ Suffolciæ Filius, qui conjugali inter se et piâ ergâ Deum fide insignes, ob professionem religionis à Papismo repurgatæ, spontè ex Angliâ profugerunt Mariâ regnante, Ao. Dni. M.D.LIII.

Idem Peregrinus Bertie, postea regnante Elizabethâ, An. Dom. M.D.LXXX. VIII. Copiarum Anglicarum in fœderato Belgio sub felicissimis illius Reginæ auspiciis militantium, locum tenens generalis constitutus * est et posteros deinceps reliquit, qui etiamnum inclarescunt titulo Comitum de Lindsey et jure hereditario magnorum Angliæ Camerariorum. Hunc lapidem, altero partim vetustate exeso, partim militum vi fracto, instauravit Carolus Bertie, Montacuti Comitis de Lindsey filius, et serenissimi Dni. Caroli II. Magnæ Britanniæ regis ad plerosque Sac. Rom. Imperii Electores aliosque Germaniæ Principes Ablegatus Extraordinarius, An'o Dni. M.D.C.LXXX.

* Constitutis, in Banks, but whether the error exists in the original, or has arisen from the printer, I cannot pretend to say.

“Antony Perenot, Bishop of Arras.”—p. 32.

He was, according to Grotius, a mixture of all that was great and detestable.—“In eo industria, vigilantia, ambitio, luxus, avaritia, bona malaque omnia excellebant.” De Thou calls him, “Perenotus homo vafer;” and Strada treats him as the author of the disturbances in the Netherlands by his violent counsels; but Moreri defends him strenuously, as far as mere assertion can be said to defend any man.

Sigismond August weeps for his young wife.—p. 76.

This Sigismond, the second of that name, and the last of the House of the Jagellons, succeeded to the throne of Poland in 1548, having been crowned in the life-time of his father. He does not appear to have been a patron of the Protestants; but, on the contrary, to have tolerated them only as long as he was compelled to do so by circumstances. Being a widower, he thought proper, in spite of the entreaties of his relations and the whole Polish nobility, to marry Barbe Radzivil, the daughter of George Radzivil, Catellain of Wilna, and the widow of Gastold, Palatin of Lithuania. “Il obligea,” says Moreri, “les Gentilshommes et le Senat du Royaume de la reconnoître pour son épouse légitime et pour Reine de Pologne. La Noblesse Polonoise, ayant eu cette complaisance pour son roi, se persuada qu’elle se

pouvoit donner plus de licence qu'auparavant. Il ne lui avoit pas encore été permis d'envoyer ses *enfants* dans les Universités Protestantes d'Allemagne; elle le demanda et il fut obligé d'y consentir, sur ce qu'on lui representa que les Professeurs de ces Universités étoient plus savans que les autres. Ce fut par là que la Reformation entra dans la Pologne, car les Gentilshommes Polonois retournèrent dans leur pays, mieux instruits de la doctrine des Protestans, que des Lettres Humaines, et ravagèrent les Eglises dans les Palatinats où ils étoient les plus forts. Le Roi, résolu de ne se pas commettre avec la noblesse pour les intérêts de la religion, pendant qu'il auroit sur les bras les Tartares et les Moscovites, ne repondoit aux requêtes des Catholiques que par des remises, ce que lui fit donner le nom de ROI GIOIRON, c'est à dire, en langue du pays, ROI DE DEMAIN. Dans la suite son zèle se réveilla quoiqu'un peu tard et lui fit chasser les ministres hors de ses états.

—MORELI.—*Sub voce Sigismond.*

The bond of the Geusen spread from place to place.—p. 169.

In the time of Philip the Second, under the viceroyship of the blood-thirsty Duke of Alba, this name was given to the allied nobility in the Netherlands, and particularly to the discontented. In the year 1564 Philip sent nine inquisitors to put into force the Trent Decretal through the Netherlands, and through this step brought the

Catholics and Protestants into a fearful uproar. The nobility entered into the forementioned compact, in which they declared that they would not be cited before the nine inquisitors. In a solemn procession they presented the act to the Regent Margaret, that it might be forwarded to the Court of Madrid, which, instead of paying attention to this strong measure, treated the Petitioners with contempt, and from the year 1565 they were called by their adversaries *Geusen*, a word for which we have no term exactly corresponding, and which can only be imperfectly translated by the word Beggars. In the same way the Spaniards called those exiles, who fled to the other side of the water and fitted out privateers against them, *Wassergeusen*. The reproach, meant to be conveyed by this term, has, by an abuse of language, past over into the French word, *Gueux*, and differs from its synonymes, *Mendiant*, (a public beggar), and *Caimand* (one who begs alms from house to house), by the peculiar disgracefulness of his condition implied in it and the way in which the beggar, so destined, carries on his occupation.

The report of a pistol, the fall of the Prince at full length, and a cry of horror from every lip, were the answer to these mild paternal words.—p. 241.

The murderer was one Balthazar Gerard, a native of Burgundy, who was urged thereto by a Cordelier and a Jesuit. He obtained admittance to the Prince under the

pretence of wanting his signature to a passport; and, drawing out a pistol, loaded with three balls, shot him through the body. William fell, exclaiming, "My God! have pity on thy people!" and instantly expired in the fifty-second year of his age, A. D. 1584. He was buried with almost regal honours, amidst the tears of a people who used familiarly to style him, "Father William." His talents made him a dangerous enemy to Spain, but Grotius seems to think that he was taken off in good time for his own reputation. "At ingruentia undique pericula mors Arausionensis impulit, importunissimo tempore si Belgas spectamus quorum res turbidæ et afflictæ ejus poterant unius consilio regi; sin ipsum, immaturè occidisse videri non potest, qui fortunæ publicæ, cui suam arctissimè devinxerat, crescentibus malis ereptus est."—GROTIUS—*Annalium*, Lib. iv. p. 85.

Yes, it will fall and how many with it!—p. 263.

The surrender of this place was the occasion of much slander against Lord Willoughby, and in particular a pamphlet was published against him, by a private individual, as he says, but pretending to be by the authority of the United States, which latter, however, deemed it proper to deny the libel in England by their ambassadors. Not contented with this, he answered the attack by a vigorous defence in French, throwing the blame of the business on his troops, who mutinied for

want of pay, and offering to measure swords with any who thought proper to deny his allegations. The pamphlet is dated 1584, and bears the following prodigious title.—“ Bref discours pour donner Contentement à tous ceux qui ne cognoisans la verité, parlent indiscretement de la Sérénissime Roine d'Angleterre, du Seigneur Baron de Wyllughby, Gouverneur général de son Secours des Provinces unies des Paye Bas et de la Nation Anglois à raison de certain placcat du 17 d'Avril 1589, stile nouveau, mis en lumière par aucun personnes particulieres comme se dict, sous le nom des etats Généraux desdites Provinces, Par lequel discours un chacun est prié et requis de parler bien et en honneur des actions desdits estats Généraux légitimement assemblés.”

But, indeed, the probabilities are in favour of Peregrine, who appears to have been a great general. A French historian says ; “ My Lord Willoughby fut un des plus célèbres Généraux de son tems et les historiens le nomment le premier Capitaine de la Reine.—On ne lui reproche que sa trop grande fierté, qui l'empêcha de de s'attacher à la cour ; repondant à ses amis qui l'exhorterent à la complaisance, que la cour n'étoit pas son élément, et, que n'étant pas reptile, il lui étoit impossible de ramper.” — *Hist. d'Angleterre, &c. par M. DE LARREY*, t. ii.

It appears, too, from Holinshed, that he was Elizabeth's ambassador to Denmark, to invest the King of

that country with the Order of the Garter. "On the eight and twentieth of June, Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughbie, of Ersbie, appointed Ambassador to Frederike the Second, King of Denmarke with the Garter, whereunto he had been elected and chosen a long time before, tooke his leave of the Queene's Majestie at Greenwich.—HOLINSHED. Q. *Elizabeth*.

THE END.

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